

**HOUGHTON COUNTY APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 28, 2025**

The Houghton County Appointment Committee held an Appointment Committee meeting on Monday, April 28, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., in the 5th Floor Conference room of the Courthouse, City of Houghton with public attending in person and by Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order:

Judge Strome called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Committee did the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call:

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

Fraser Strome-Probate Judge, Dan Helmer-Prosecuting Attorney and Jennifer Kelly-County Clerk.

Also in attendance was Sara Huuki-Building Department, John Pekkala-Drain Commissioner and Renee Cunningham, Chief Deputy County Clerk who was doing the minutes. Nolan Miles was by Microsoft Teams.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion was made by Daniel Helmer and seconded by Fraser Strome to approve the Agenda as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote: Ayes 3, Nays 0.

Approval of 4/21/25 Minutes:

Motion was made by Daniel Helmer and seconded by Fraser Strome to approve the April 21, 2025 minutes as presented.

The Motion carried by a voice vote of: Ayes 3, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

None.

Conduct Interviews for Houghton County Drain Commissioner:

Judge Strome stated John Pekkala would give an overview of his job to each candidate. John Pekkala provided a handout with his top 10 job duties.

Each Committee member will rotate and ask questions to each candidate. There will be 8 questions.

Interview #1:

John Gierke appeared in person. John Pekkala went through his 10 top job responsibilities. He provided a document with his answers and a map regarding Peepsock Circle to discuss drain districts. He has taken the 2 certification tests.

The Committee asked the 8 questions, and John Gierke answered them.

Interview #2:

Max Jouppe appeared in person. John Pekkala went through his 10 top job duties

The Committee asked the 8 questions, and Max Jouppe answered them. Max Jouppe asked the Committee to withdraw his application. The Committee agreed to do so. He has both certificates.

Interview #3:

Nolan Miles appeared by Microsoft Teams. Due to hearing John Pekkala's duties twice, he stated he did not need to hear them again.

The Committee asked the 8 questions, and Nolan Miles answered them. He has taken both certification tests.

Interview #4:

Brian Therrian appeared in person. John Pekkala went through his 10 top job duties.

The Committee asked the 8 questions, and Brian Therrian answered them. He was certified in the past, but has expired with his certifications. He is retaking the tests on June 1st.

Interview #5:

Todd Larson appeared in person. John Pekkala went through his 10 top job duties. He has taken both certification tests.

The Committee lost the internet connection at 12:01 pm. Connection was made at 12:03 pm. No one was on Microsoft Teams when connection was lost, or when it was reconnected.

Judge Strome stated the Committee would adjourn for lunch and reconvene at 1:30 pm. It was decided that the Committee would vote on a piece of paper and then the votes would be counted. He commented on how great the candidates were.

Temporarily Adjourn meeting:

Motion was made by Daniel Helmer, and seconded by Fraser Strome to adjourn until 1:30 pm.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 3, Nays 0.

Appoint a new Drain Commissioner:

Fraser Strome re-opened the meeting at 1:35 pm. No one was in attendance by Microsoft Teams.

Fraser Strome stated that none of the Committee members had met or talked about the selection for appointing the Drain Commissioner.

Renee Cunningham handed out a piece of paper to each Committee member. Each Committee member wrote down a candidate's first and last name and then folded their vote and put it in a container. Fraser Strome instructed Renee Cunningham to count the votes.

There was 1 vote for John Gierke, and 2 votes for Nolan Miles.

The Committee was satisfied with the votes.

A Motion was made by Daniel Helmer, and seconded by Fraser Strome to appoint Nolan Miles to the interim Drain Commissioner position.

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 3, Nays 0.

Public Comments:

Prosecutor Helmer stated it was a difficult decision to make. Judge Strome agreed.

Clerk Kelly stated when the minutes were done, she would bring them to each Committee member or have them come to her office so they get signed.

Clerk Kelly will notify Nolan Miles of the Committee's decision.

Prosecutor Helmer will notify the three (3) others of the Committee's decision.

Adjournment:

Prosecutor Helmer made a Motion to close the meeting with a second from Judge Strome at 2:00 p.m..

The Motion carried by a voice vote. Ayes 3, Nays 0.

Fraser Strome

Daniel Helmer

Jennifer Kelly