

**HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
April 14, 2026**

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Circuit Courtroom of the Courthouse, City of Houghton with the public viewing in person and by Zoom.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tikkanen at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Tikkanen.

Roll call:

The following commissioners responded to roll call done by Chief Deputy Clerk, Renee Cunningham:

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

Absent: None

Approval of Minutes: March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting as presented.

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

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Anderson requested #5B be added for the Keweenaw Indivisible Letter.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the Agenda with the one (1) addition.

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

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

Teresa Kariniemi Copper Country Republican Party member read a letter in support of Sheriff, Josh Saaranen and thanked him for his leadership.

Richard Canabas, Keweenaw Indivisible stated the members of the public should be comfortable living in Houghton County and to have a call to action to help those in fear. Richard stated that they would like law enforcement to stand with them.

Heather Mroz a member of the leadership team for Keweenaw Indivisible told the Board of Commissioners that the Board needs to provide a public way to keep the community informed.

A unknown name stated when people stay engaged, we have a safer community.

Approval of Bills-\$1,561,041.22:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve paying the bills submitted of \$1,561,041.22 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Janssen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

Reports:

Standing Committee:

Commissioner Janssen reported to the Board on the following:

The Conservation District annual tree sale is now in progress with the delivery to be in early May.

Commissioner Keranen reported to the Board on the following:

His reports will be later in the agenda.

Commissioner Britz reported to the Board on the following:

Congratulated the Houghton Hockey team on their state Championship win and congratulated other local teams.

Commissioner Anderson reported to the Board on the following:

He discussed the CCISD Handout that was mailed to the public for the renewal on the May 2026 ballot. Discussed the incoming monies for the marijuana funds the county receives.

Chairman Tikkanen reported to the Board on the following:

Congratulated the Calumet School Robotics team in their championship win and they will be now heading to downstate Michigan to compete. He also congratulated other local teams.

Special Committees:

None

County Officers:

Sheriff Saaranen stated that there are currently 31 inmates housed in the jail.

Administrator Rheault reported that her office is now fully staffed with the addition of a Finance Manager and an Assistant Finance Manager.

Unfinished Business

1. Resolution #26-02 Supporting House Bills 5152 and 5153

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution #26-02 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.



**HOUGHTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

**SUPPORTING HOUSE BILLS 5152 AND 5153
RESOLUTION #26-02**

WHEREAS, at a Regular Meeting on March 10, 2026, the Houghton County Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, House Bills 5152 and 5153 have been introduced in the Michigan Legislature to amend the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, providing critical protections for homeowners during mortgage foreclosure proceedings; and

WHEREAS, County Officials in Michigan have identified a pattern of predatory practices where third-party firms target vulnerable residents who are facing mortgage foreclosure; and

WHEREAS, these firms exploit homeowners and heirs by convincing them to sell either the property itself or their statutory rights to surplus foreclosure proceeds and redemption, often stripping residents of tens of thousands of dollars in home equity for a fraction of the true value; and

WHEREAS, County Officials have witnessed firsthand these firms targeting vulnerable residents after an auction has concluded, including an instance where an elderly heir was paid \$100 to sign away her rights to over \$10,000 in known surplus proceeds; and

WHEREAS, these predatory activities not only harm homeowners, they create a significant and ongoing burden for County's departments statewide, including the Sheriff's Office, the Register of Deeds, the Probate Court, and the Corporate Counsel, which must expend public resources to manage fraudulent claims and improperly filed probate estates; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 5153 would directly stop this predatory model by making a mortgagor's right to surplus money and right of redemption non-assignable and non-transferable after a notice of foreclosure is recorded, except through legitimate testate or intestate succession; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 5152 would further protect homeowners by requiring a mandatory, plain-English "Notice of Rights" for any conveyance of property after a foreclosure notice is recorded, ensuring the seller fully understands they are waiving their rights to redemption, occupancy, and surplus proceeds; and

WHEREAS, the Counties across Michigan have identified the burdens created by these practices and are asking the Houghton County Board of Commissioners for a Resolution of support for this vital legislation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners fully supports House Bills 5152 and 5153, which will protect Houghton County residents and residents across the State of Michigan, from foreclosure fraud, preserve home equity for families, and reduce the burden on local government resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk shall forward copies of this Resolution to the Governor of the State of Michigan, the Majority Leader of the Michigan Senate, the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, and all Michigan Counties for their consideration and action and distribute to all County Clerks to be a posted communication in each County.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No: None (0)

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular Monthly Meeting held on April 14, 2026, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of April, 2026.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

2. Resolution #26-07 Support of bringing Amtrak Passenger Rail Service to the Upper Peninsula

Commissioner Britz informed the Board that his brother is a third-generation railroad worker. He talked about the ongoing issue with the properties on the waterfront with the railroad trail still in place. Britz is against the resolution as it is an issue going through town and by MTU.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution #26-07 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen 3.

NO: Keranen, Britz 2

Commissioner Janssen commented that she does not see Amtrak pouring money into getting the rails back in place.

Commissioner Britz stated he is looking out for District 5.

Chairman Tikkanen believes it is a positive effort with belief in the future. If Amtrak were to put in a railroad system, then Calumet would help in the effort.

Commissioner Janssen stated with the current problems with the trails between Houghton and Chassell would be adding salt to the wound that is already there with the restrictions.

Commissioner Britz further stated that there would be safety concerns with snowmobiles. Amtrak would also be a safety issue.

Chairman Tikkanen stated the rail easements do not go away.



**HOUGHTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF BRINGING AMTRAK PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE
TO THE UPPER PENINSULA
RESOLUTION #26-07**

WHEREAS, Amtrak is working on plans to extend passenger rail service from Milwaukee, WI, as well as other expansions across Northeast Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the federal and state highways have become very busy as tourists travel to enjoy the natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities of Michigan's Upper Peninsula; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak has an opportunity to expand their passenger rail service to the Upper Peninsula which would allow tourists and locals a new mode of transportation which is a benefit to all; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak travel would allow people the advantage of enjoying the scenery and beauty that the Upper Peninsula has to offer, and this would be a safe way of transportation between snowstorms and wildlife as we all drive across the Upper Peninsula; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners supports bringing Amtrak passenger rail service to the Upper Peninsula.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Absent: None.

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular Monthly Meeting held on April 14, 2026, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of April, 2026.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

3. Resolution #26-04 Declaring International Compost Awareness Week.

Commissioner Janssen stated she approves of this Resolution.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to adopt Resolution #26-04 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.
NO: None. 0



**HOUGHTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

**RESOLUTION DECLARING INTERNATIONAL COMPOST AWARENESS WEEK
(May 3-9, 2026)
Resolution #26-04**

WHEREAS, composting is a way of returning organic resources to the soil and is a way of conserving water during extreme drought or flooding conditions, reducing water consumption and non-point pollution; and a proven method of decreasing the dependence on chemical fertilizers and decreasing erosion; and

WHEREAS, composting is an effective form of waste reduction, reuse and recycling;

and since organic materials make up approximately 30% of the material going to landfills, composting is becoming one of the primary methods communities use to reach waste diversion goals; and

WHEREAS, materials such as yard trimmings, vegetable cuttings, biosolids, food scraps, manures, and hay shavings, when properly managed to protect public health and the environment, have all been composted and converted into a beneficial product known as compost; and

WHEREAS, communities, through their local governments, highway departments, soil conservation service and extension offices, and public works professionals, can have significant impact on clean water, soil, climate change, and landfill diversion by using compost for public works projects; and

WHEREAS, composting supports the MI Healthy Climate Plan to promote economic development, protect water and air quality, improve public health, and lessen reliance on landfills; and

WHEREAS, the Compost Research & Education Foundation, along with Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and other countries have declared the first full week of May to be the annual International Compost Awareness Week; and,

WHEREAS, this year's theme is Compost: Feed the Soil that Feeds Us. The 2026 theme was chosen with the goal of highlighting the benefits of composting in agriculture and food production, and its role in supporting healthy, nutritious food, and by extension, healthy people and communities. Beyond responsible waste management, composting recognizes the interconnectedness between every person who eats and the earth that provides all of our food, as well as our agency in feeding the earth our scraps so that the soil may continue to provide for us abundantly. Compost grows healthy soil, healthy food, and a healthy Michigan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners hereby declares the week of May 3, 2026 through May 9, 2026 as International Compost Awareness Week, in recognition of the efforts of Houghton County households, businesses, farmers, landscapers, extension agents, recyclers, public workers, composters, watershed health advocates, and plant growers everywhere who contribute to the positive impacts of composting.



**HOUGHTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING ANY LEGISLATION PREEMPTING LOCAL CONTROL
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF DATA CENTERS/BATTERY STORAGE FACILITIES
RESOLUTION #26-08**

WHEREAS, data centers/battery storage facilities are large-scale industrial facilities that require substantial amounts of land, electricity, and water resources; and

WHEREAS, the growth of data center/battery storage facility development across the United States has placed increasing strain on local electrical grids, water supplies, and public infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the construction and operation of data centers/battery storage facilities may negatively impact nearby residential communities through noise pollution, visual impacts, environmental degradation, and reduced quality of life; and

WHEREAS, data centers/battery storage facilities may conflict with the County’s comprehensive plan, zoning ordinances, and long-term land use priorities; and

WHEREAS, the siting of data centers/battery storage facilities may limit future economic development opportunities by consuming land and utility capacity that could otherwise support more diverse, employment-generating uses; and

WHEREAS, residents of Houghton County have expressed significant concern regarding the cumulative impacts of data center/battery storage facility development on the environment, infrastructure, and community; and

WHEREAS, if local control is preempted, a county, township, city or village would be unable to determine requirements for construction, operation, use or maintenances of a data center/battery storage facility; and

WHEREAS, if a county already has a data center/battery storage facility policy, practice, regulation, rule, or ordinance on record, it may be null and void; and

WHEREAS, all other types of energy facilities, while regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission, must adhere to local zoning.

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Houghton County Board Commissioners respectfully requests that the Michigan Legislators, in their respective Bodies, along with the Governor, expedite quickly action to repeal PA 233 and PA 235.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that if subsequent legislation is considered relative to data centers/battery storage facilities and futuristic “Green Energy” programs that proper inclusion of Michigan townships, cities, and villages be included in the planning and construction to ensure the safety of the Environment and appropriate measures be included to ensure property restoration of the ecosystem.

AND FINALLY, that the appropriate Michigan Department be authorized to ensure restoration compliance upon the abandonment of the property.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner:

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

Absent: None.

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular Monthly Meeting held on April 14, 2026, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of April, 2026.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

4. Response to concerns regarding ICE, Houghton County Sheriff

a. Copper Country Republican Party Letter of Support

Sheriff Josh Saaranen addressed the Board and public in attendance. He read a statement and talked about enforcing laws to keep the public safe. He also stated that ICE tracks what all Sheriff Offices are doing. Deputies are not deputized to enforce/work with ICE. A copy of the statement was given to the Chief Deputy Clerk to have available for the public to request a copy.

b. Keweenaw Indivisible

Chairman Tikkanen acknowledged that the Board received Democrat and Republican Party letters with opinions on the Keweenaw Indivisible group.

Commissioner Britz stated that both parties were told that they could read letters in the meeting.

Dan Holcomb, Chairman of the Republican Party read a letter of support for Sheriff Saaranen. He stated the Copper Country Republican Party stands with the Sheriff.

A Keweenaw Indivisible member (no name stated) thanked the Sheriff and the Copper Country Republican Party. Stated the original resolution was supported by the Sheriff. She expressed it is up to all of us to make our community safe. The member read a statement.

5. Jail Committees Final Reports

County Held Property Committee:

Commissioner Keranen stated the appraisal on the Canal View property would be complete on April 23, 2026. The Marina has some grants with stipulations and the Transfer Station is experiencing difficulties finding a future sale.

Chairman Tikkanen recommended maintaining the Marina and Transfer Station.

Commissioner Keranen let the board know that he will email the appraisal to them when he receives it.

Sharon Avenue Property Committee:

Chairman Britz stated until we have a facility to move people to, we cannot move forward. He discussed the OHM RFP for the construction concerns and firewall. OHM is looking into the concerns. He talked about moving the Building Department, Clerks/Register of Deeds offices and Administration offices to the Sharon Avenue Property. The Commissioner Hall would also be moved to the property.

Jaikob Djerf brought up that the Equalization Department needs to be in the same location as the Clerk/Register of Deeds Office.

Commissioner Britz stated a four-year extension was given to the MSU Extension Office by the City of Hancock to keep their office at the HOCO Arena. OHM is ready to discuss further recommendations. Todd and Joel went to look at the property. OHM wants to get together next week to discuss options.

Chairman Tikkanen stated the current jail could be reused but a new roof would be needed. Possible storage. He feels the Sharon Avenue property is structurally sound. Todd LaRoux stated OHM came up with a fix for the roof to be load bearing.

Jail Committee:

Faith Morrison discussed the 15-page report in the Board's packet. The Committee had 8 meetings. She will post it on the LWV Website and on the County website if given permission. She discussed the design and how many people need to be housed are important items. The design was for a 51 daily population in the jail. She discussed the Committee's recommendations.

Chairman Tikkanen discussed the appraisal from Canal View and to discuss it at the May meeting or to call a special meeting. He discussed the bond issue for the cost that is estimated for the new jail and whether to put the milage on in November 2026 or wait until November 2028. Commissioner Anderson discussed narrowing down what the need is for November 2026 by talking to contractors and developers. Faith Morrison gave a breakdown of spaces and cells, booking space, housing juveniles, and mental health areas for inmates. Chairman discussed the three (3) Committees continuing.

6. RFP for Accounting Services Update

Commissioner Anderson asked if a master reconciliation is done as it has been four (4) years since the County had a master reconciliation. Administrator Rheault stated the County has Joe for one (1) more month.

7. RFP for Cyber Security Services

Chairman Tikkanen discussed this at the April work session. He feels the County has adequate services in place. He stated there was little to no response received so far from cyber security companies.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to put out a RFP for cyber security proposals.

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

8. Network Outage and Operations Disruption Policy

Commissioner Janssen stated the Road Commission workers are essential personnel.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to approve the Network Outage and Operations Disruption Policy as presented.

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

9. Inclement Weather and Emergency Closures Policy

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the Inclement Weather and Emergency Closures Policy as presented.

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

Commissioner Britz stated that the Road Commission will make their own decision.

10. Building Department Quotes for Truck Purchase

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Britz to accept the bid from Keweenaw Chevrolet as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Britz, Tikkanen, Anderson, Janssen 5.

NO: None 0.

New Business:

1. County Equalization Report

Jaikob Djerf, Equalization, stated their department is recommending the following equalized values be adopted:

Assessed/Equalized 2025 Assessed/Equalized 2026
Real 1,954,074,532 Real Property 2,187,294,817
Personal 87,804,968 Personal Property 99,123,978
Total 2,041,879,500 è Total 2,286,418,795
For a total Equalized Value of 2,286,418,795

Overall, between 2025 and 2026, there was an increase in the total equalized values of 244,539,295 or a 11.98% increase. Summarized on pages 5, 6, & 7

The top five units for equalized value, summarized on page 13 are respectively:

1. Houghton City – 288,181,246
2. Portage Twp – 266,378,324
3. Calumet Twp – 258,946,718
4. Torch Lake Twp – 250,009,042
5. Hancock City – 247,505,847

Taxable 2025 Taxable 2026

Real 1,246,415,432 Real 1,325,025,314
Personal 87,804,968 Personal 99,123,978
Total 1,334,220,310 è Total 1,424,149,292
For a total Taxable Value of 1,424,149,292

Overall, between 2025 and 2026, there was an increase in the total taxable values of 89,928,982 or a 6.74% increase. Summarized on pages 8, 9, & 10

The top five units for Taxable value, summarized on page 13 are respectively:

1. Houghton City – 206,074,753
2. Hancock City – 163,053,410
3. Portage Twp – 158,937,675
4. Calumet Twp – 148,087,955
5. Torch Lake Twp – 145,899,534

For 2026 roughly 55% of properties had principal residence exemptions and 45% were non principal residences. And we have over 21,240,XXX in exempt taxable value from properties receiving the disabled veteran’s exemption, summarized on pages 11 & 12.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt the County Equalization Report as presented.

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

2. Connections not Cuffs Grant, Lease Agreement

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to approve the lease agreement for the Connections not Cuffs grant as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Keranen, Tikkanen, Anderson, Janssen 5.

NO: None 0.

3. Connections not Cuffs, Vehicle Purchase Request.

Two bids were received for the one (1) vehicle request. \$31,500 is available. Chairman Tikkanen opened the envelopes containing the bids. Envelope #1-Keweenaw Chevrolet for a 2026 Traverse \$41,878.00. Envelope #2-Copper Country Ford for a 2026 Ford Explorer \$37,183.68. Envelope #3-Keweenaw Chevrolet for a 2022 Traverse \$26,794.00 with 57,443 miles with 3-year warranty. Envelope #4-Copper Country Ford for a 2025 Explorer \$41,787.71 with 26,000 miles.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the used Traverse from Keweenaw Chevrolet with the 3-year warranty as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.
NO: None 0.

4. Joe Foster, 2026 Houghton County Survey & Remonumentation Contracts

Joe Foster discussed the 2026 contract for \$71,798.00. He provided a handout to the Board for the areas they will be working on.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the 2026 Houghton County Survey and Remonumentation Contract as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.
NO: None 0

5. Adam Welstead, Portage Second Crossing

Jeff Ratcliffe introduced Adam Welstead. Adam explained they brought in people to talk about a second crossing bridge. He explained they need to tackle the feasibility study. He discussed an essential education class to get the students involved. Phase 1 was a 14-week class. They will discuss what and where and why a second crossing is needed. There will be 3 groups. The students will propose a location east of the current bridge using public land. The why is because the Copper Country is growing. There are approximately 400,000 visitors yearly. He discussed the asset management of the bridge and to think beyond. The report will be publicly available. The next class will begin in the spring.

Commissioner Anderson stated a half mill appropriation was requested a few years back and the County did not receive it. Houghton County is one of two (2) locations with only one (1) bridge.

6. Resolution #26-09 to establish water system and sanitary sewer system rates and charges

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Britz to adopt Resolution #26-09 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Britz, Tikkanen, Keranen, Janssen 5.
NO: None 0



**HOUGHTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

**RESOLUTION OF HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO
ESTABLISH WATER SYSTEM AND SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM RATES AND
CHARGES
RESOLUTION #26-06**

WHEREAS, the Houghton County Memorial Airport Committee is required to annually review all water and sewer system rates, fees, and charges, pursuant to Section 10.1 of the Houghton County Industrial Airpark and Memorial Airport Water System Ordinance, and Section 35 of the Houghton County Industrial Airpark and Memorial Airport Sanitary Sewer System Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Airport Committee is further authorized to recommend rate revisions to the Houghton County Board of Commissioners as may from time to time be necessary or appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the Houghton County Memorial Airport Committee has submitted its recommendation to the Houghton County Board of Commissioners for adjustment of water and sewer rates, fees, and charges, as set forth in the proposed Rate Schedule attached as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: SECTION 1. ADOPTION OF WATER AND SANITARY SEWER RATES The Houghton County Board of Commissioners establishes those water and sanitary sewer rates set forth in the Rate Schedule attached hereto as Exhibit A, effective for the April billing cycle starting on/about April 15th, 2026.

SECTION 2. IMPLEMENTATION The Airport Manager is hereby authorized and directed to take all steps necessary to implement the water and sanitary sewer rates set forth in this.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:
Supported by Commissioner:
Roll Call Vote:
 Yes:
 No: None (0)
 Absent: None

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular Monthly Meeting held on April 14, 2026, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of April, 2026.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

7. UPCAP May Conference

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to authorize the Commissioners, Administrator and County Clerk to attend the UPCAP May Conference in Escanaba.

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

8. Appreciation Letter to Rep. Bergman

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Keranen to authorize Administrator Rheault to write a letter to Rep. Bergman.

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

9. Ad Hoc Website Committee

Commissioner Janssen stated she will provide additional information next month. Alex Radke will be talking to Opus Web. A calendar of events will be added to the County website. There will be a policy for department heads to keep their information up to date. Alex Radke thanked Opus Web for their website compliance.

10. Tri-County Public Defenders, Monthly Reimbursement Request-\$70,880.55

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the monthly reimbursement request of \$70,880.55 to the Tri-County Public Defenders as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

11. Alex Radke, JAVS Quote

Alex Radke stated he received a quote from JAVS and two (2) quotes from Good Times Music for two (2) different systems. They will service the microphones going forward. The microphones are for the commissioners. Chairman Tikkanen stated the courts do business with JAVS. He asked if anyone has asked permission from Judge Bulleit. Alex Radke stated he had permission.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to approve the JAVS quote for \$5,409.00 as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Anderson, Janssen, Tikkanen, Keranen, Britz 5.

NO: None 0.

12. Materials Management Mini Excavator Maintenance

A quote for \$20,376.90 was received from McCoy to replace the tracks on the mini excavator.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Janssen to accept the quote from McCoy for \$20,376.90 as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Keranen, Janssen, Tikkanen, Anderson, Britz 5.
NO: None 0.

13. UP Opioid Taskforce County Gathering

Chairman Tikkanen stated it is chaotic on how funds are used when received. He suggested someone at least attend virtually for the Upper Peninsula Opioid Taskforce County Gathering on Friday, May 1, 2026 in Escanaba.

14. Resolution #26-05 Opposing House Bill 4583 and Any Legislation that limits control over property tax millage election timing

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adopt Resolution #26-05 as presented.

The Motion carried by the following vote.

YES: Janssen, Anderson, Tikkanen, Britz 4.
NO: Keranen 1.



HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931
Telephone: (906) 482-8307

Resolution Opposing House Bill 4583 of 2025 HOUGHTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION # 26-05

OPPOSING HOUSE BILL 4583 AND ANY LEGISLATION THAT LIMITS LOCAL CONTROL OVER PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE ELECTION TIMING

Whereas, House Bill 4583 would require local taxing units to limit proposals to impose, renew, or increase a property tax millage to the November regular election date; and

Whereas, local taxing units affected by HB 4583 include counties, cities, villages, townships, school districts, intermediate school districts, community college districts, and local authorities; and

Whereas, counties rely on property tax millages to fund essential public services, including public safety, infrastructure, and community programs; and

Whereas, restricting millage proposals to a single annual election date removes the ability of local governments to respond in a timely manner to urgent fiscal or operational needs; and

Whereas, limiting millage elections to November undermines local control by preventing county governments from determining the most appropriate timing for ballot proposals based on local conditions; and

Whereas, if a millage proposal fails at a November election, counties would be required to wait an entire year before presenting the proposal again, rather than utilizing available election dates in May or August; and

Whereas, this limitation reduces flexibility, delays critical funding decisions, and may negatively impact a county’s ability to maintain service levels and respond to community needs; and

Whereas, preserving local decision-making authority is essential to effective governance and responsiveness to residents;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Houghton County Board of Commissioners opposes House Bill 4583 and any similar legislation that restricts the ability of local governments to determine when property tax millage proposals may be placed before voters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County urges members of the Michigan Senate to reject HB 4583; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor, members of the Michigan Legislature, and the Michigan Association of Counties.

Upon a call of the roll, the vote was as follows:

Moved by Commissioner:

Supported by Commissioner: Anderson

Roll Call Vote:

Yes:

No:

Absent: None

Motion carried.

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman
Houghton County Board of Commission

Date

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss.
COUNTY OF HOUGHTON)+

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified County Clerk of the County of Houghton, State of Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the County Board of the County of Houghton at its Regular Monthly Meeting held on April 14, 2026, the original of which Resolution is on file in my office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my official signature, this 14th day of April, 2026.

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk
County of Houghton

Travel:

1. Todd LaRoux & Joel Watson-COCM Conference

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the travel request for Todd and Joel to attend the COCM Conference as presented.

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

15. Appropriations

- a. **Copper Country Community Mental Health-\$27,415.82**
- b. **Western Upper Peninsula Health Department-\$69,106.50**
- c. **WUPPDR-\$7,435.50**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Janssen and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve all three (3) above-mentioned Appropriations as presented.

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

Public Comments:

Mel (last name unknown) addressed the Board regarding ICE concerns.

David Gemignani questioned the Chairman on why his request to be on the Agenda in March was put on the agenda and then taken off. He requested communication and who the point of contact is. He received no response from the Administrator. Chairman Tikkanen asked if David Gemignani has attended a work session. Chairman Tikkanen stated David Gemignani would be on the May Work Session's Agenda. David stated he put in a formal request and was told it was inappropriate to talk about at a Work Session and Board meeting. He has 6 months to file the FSR. The MIDC has changed the FSR and have not had a reply. No money will be sent to the County until the forms are filed. No responses from the Commissioners or Administrator.

Ann Harris stated she has requested timely reporting and a weekly meeting. She offered to work with Administrator Rheault to complete the forms but requested communication.

Dan Holcomb addressed the Board asking if Adams Township has a binding or non-binding Resolutions. Commissioner Anderson stated #26-7 is non-binding and #26-02 is also non-binding as they are just giving support.

Shaundel Sumarco addressed the Board and stated that five (5) nursing homes in the state receive funding and if Canal View is sold, the funding would go away. She feels the community is aging. Chairman Tikkanen stated they are going through to support of selling Canal View and there are mixed feelings on the Board to sell Canal View. This is only a review process and 80% of seniors need Canal View.

Chrissy Sundstrom addressed the Board regarding the Copper Country Recycling Initiative. She thanked the Board for their support.

Beau LaFave addressed the Board and stated he came to experience the County Board meeting. He stated if he was elected, he will work to bring money to the jail and the community and to get the money for the 2nd bridge.

Craig Bekkala addressed the Board regarding renting a boat slip at the marina. He cannot do it at a public marina. A private marina he can. The 2026 season is 15 days shorter than 2025. Commissioner Anderson stated the County does not have staff after October 15th. Todd LaRoux stated the bathrooms and laundry are shut down around October 15th.

Faith Morrison stated the LWV hosted Prosecutor, Dan Helmer. She discussed when inmates plead guilty and must wait to be sentenced. Average time is 99 days. There are currently 8 inmates on that list. She recommended listening to Dan Helmer on the radio on Saturday on Copper Country Today. Dan Helmer would like the jail built next to the courthouse. All three (3) courts have scheduling problems.

Announcements:

1. **There is a new email address for submitting agenda items for consideration by the Houghton County Board of Commissioners: agenda.houghtoncounty.gov. Agenda item requests will only be considered officially received if they are submitted to this email address or delivered in paper form to the Houghton County Administrator's Office. Submissions sent to any other email address may not be considered received. More information about submitting agenda item requests can be found**

under the Board of Commissioners page on the County website:
<https://houghtoncounty.gov/commissions-board.php>

None.

Adjournment:

A Motion was made by Commissioner Keranen and seconded by Chairman Anderson to adjourn at 8:56 p.m.

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

Tom Tikkanen, Chairman

Jennifer Kelly, County Clerk

APPROVED: _____

Clerk's Initials