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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE COPPER COUNTRY

Addressing Issues with the Houghton County Jail

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Jail Discussion Update 7-29-2026

The following jail-related discussions have taken place since the 6/28/26 press release:
(some meeting recordings are posted at www.youtube.com/@CountyofHoughton)

6/29/2026	Jail Committee Meeting—work session on Industry Day
7/6/2026	County Board Regular Work Session—Devoted to the jail, follow up with Jail Committee on Industry Day plans, content.
7/7/2026	Jail Committee Meeting—Industry Day discussions and planning
7/14/2026	County Board Regular Meeting
7/15/2026	Industry Day at Franklin Township Hall

Summaries appear below.

Industry Day, July 15, 2026, 5-7pm. The meetings in late June through July 14 addressed the planning for *Industry Day*, which took place on July 15, 2026. The County created a webpage to house the explanation of Industry Day and which provided a single location for the documents that gave/give background for Industry Day (https://www.houghtoncounty.net/2026_industry_day.php). The events of Industry Day were widely report in the press; minutes will be posted today. Eleven contractors signed in, and many were active participants in the discussion of how to build a new jail/sheriff's office in Houghton County.

The discussion of design-build versus design-bid-build included several contractors saying that design-build is a bit more expensive than the traditional design-bid-build. Participants indicated that a good method would be for the County to hire an architecture firm (through an open bid process) and have them design the facility. Then the County would hire a construction management firm (through an open bid process) to manage the project in coordination with the architecture firm as inevitable changes came to light. The committee received this advice and found it persuasive.

Participants asked questions about the ROMs requested (rough order of magnitude estimates), and the Jail Committee members answered. Participants unable to estimate costs for the entire project were encouraged to supply estimates for the part of the project on which they felt they could comment.

The deadline for submitting the ROMs to the County Clerk (electronically, to countyclerk@houghtoncounty.gov) is 9pm this evening, Wednesday, July 29, 2026. The Jail Committee will meet tomorrow (4pm in the 5th floor conference room, in person and on MS Teams) to discuss those ROMs with the goal of drafting a recommendation of a cost number to attach to a November 3 millage question. The committee will also discuss the language on the millage question, following the plan to have that language tell the voters what they will get if that millage passes.

The County Board of Commissioners has called a special meeting for Wednesday August 5, 2026 at 1pm to consider placing jail millage language on the November 3rd ballot.

Upcoming meetings/events related to the jail project:

(Open to the public; online credentials at houghtoncounty.net)

The next meeting of the Jail Committee is **tomorrow**, Thursday, August 30, 2026 at 4pm in the 5th floor conference room of the courthouse.

7/30/2026	Jail Committee Meeting, 4pm (5 th floor)—review contractors' ROMs for jail
8/3/2026	County Board Regular Work Session—respond to Jail Committee's recommendations
8/4/2026	Election Day
8/5/2026	County Board Special Meeting, 1pm, 5 th floor conference room; consider a millage for November on the jail/sheriff's office build
8/11/2026	County Board Regular Meeting, 6pm (3 rd floor courtroom)
9/24/2026	Absent Voter Ballots available for November 3 election
11/3/2026	Election Day