PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: November 3rd, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

Place: Commissioners Room, Courthouse, Caledonia, MN

Members Present: Cindy Wright, Eric Johnson, Kurt Zehnder, Robert Schuldt, and Greg Myhre

Others Present: County Coordinator Brent Parker; Finance Director Carol Lapham, Finance Supervisor Heidi Harms, County Attorney Sue Bublitz, Public Health Director Jordan Knoke, County Engineer Brian Pogodzinski, and reporters from both the Caledonia Argus and the Filmore County Journal.

Presiding: Chairperson Myhre

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Zehnder, motion unanimously carried to approve the agenda.

Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve October 27, 2026, meeting minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPOINTMENTS

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda. Approved items included:

1) Hire Samantha Schalow as a Home and Community Based Services Social Worker (C41, Step effective December 7, 2026.

2) Hire Linda Johnson as a 67-day Election Judge, effective October 31, 2026.

3) Review and approve payments, as listed below.

2026/11/03 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCAR	8,355.70
BKC CONSTRUCTION LLC	589,419.77
CALEDONIA OIL CO INC	2,260.00
CALEDONIA/CITY OF	10,049.29
FARRELL EQUIPMENT & SUPPLY CO INC	2,409.99
LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING LLC	4,344.50
MICRO TECHNOLOGY SERVICES INC	2,995.00
MILESTONE MATERIALS	54,731.87
OFFICE OF MNIT SERVICES	5,853.05
SOLDO CONSULTING PC	3,753.75
STONEBROOKE ENGINEERING INC	6,964.89
WS TRUCKING & CONSTRUCTION LLC	10,422.50
	701,560.31
27 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN $2000.00	13,044.95
	714,605.26
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	30,629.40
	745,234.66

ACTION ITEMS

File No. 1 – County Engineer Brian Pogodzinski presented Resolution No. 26-30 supporting the City of La Crescent's pursuit of Local Road Improvement Program funding for reconstruction of Main Street between Walnut Street and County State Aid Highway 29 (Elm Street). He explained that the City proposed an off-road walking and bicycling connection and that County approval would be needed for work within County Highway 29 right-of-way. Commissioners discussed the proposed sidewalk connection, roadway configuration, and potential effects on the County roadway. Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, to approve Resolution No. 26-30. Motion unanimously carried.

File No. 2 – County Engineer Pogodzinski presented Resolution No. 26-31 supporting the City of La Crescent's pursuit of 2026–2027 MnDOT Active Transportation funding to fill gaps in its sidewalk network. He stated that the proposed sidewalk segments were on City streets and would not affect County roadway construction. Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, to approve Resolution No. 26-31. Motion unanimously carried. Pogodzinski also noted that the City of Caledonia may seek similar funding for pedestrian improvements near the Highway 44 intersection. Commissioners discussed intersection safety and possible configurations. Pogodzinski reported that July storm repairs were substantially complete, with some remaining work on County 5; September repairs and winter patching on County 21, County 16, and other affected locations were discussed. Commissioners

raised concerns about pavement on County 9 and drainage and soft spots on County 20. No additional action was taken.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Gopher to Badger 765-kV Transmission Project – Coordinator Parker reviewed Resolution No. 26-08, the County's prior correspondence to state agencies, the Public Utilities Commission, utilities, MISO, and the Governor, and the response received from Dairyland Power Cooperative. He outlined the anticipated project schedule, including a route permit application in November 2026, environmental impact statement scoping in January 2027, public hearings in spring 2027, a regulatory decision in late 2027 or early 2028, possible easement acquisition in 2028–2029, and construction in 2030–2034. Parker cautioned that dates may change. Commissioners discussed the need for timely County comments and additional resolutions, unresolved environmental and landowner concerns, potential changes in federal permitting, construction impacts on County and township roads, coordination with the Highway Department and affected townships, and communication with incoming state officials. Parker agreed to develop a step-by-step response plan and draft materials for future Board consideration. The Board separately discussed possible ordinances addressing data centers and solar development and the County's existing land-use protections. No formal action was taken.

Coordinator Updates – County Coordinator Parker reported receiving numerous calls from residents seeking clarification regarding firearm restrictions for the upcoming deer hunting season. Parker stated that Houston County remains a shotgun-only zone, while the Board discussed that firearms permitted under the existing pistol provisions remain allowable, consistent with prior years. Parker indicated that future responses to residents would clarify this distinction. The Board noted that the current county restrictions remain in effect unless changed.

Coordinator Parker commended Polly Heberlein, Melissa, Auditor/Treasurer's Office staff, election judges, and ballot board members for their work administering the November 3 general election while managing regular office responsibilities despite staffing shortages. Parker expressed appreciation for their coordination, professionalism, and continued service.

Board Updates – Chairperson Myhre reported receiving inquiries regarding shotgun-only deer hunting restrictions and requested additional public clarification. The Board also discussed questions about whether imported mini trucks could be operated or registered for road use under existing state law and County UTV rules; further research was anticipated.

Commissioner Reports and Comments – Commissioners discussed the need for clear public information on deer hunting firearm rules. A commissioner noted having submitted comments to the Minnesota Department of Revenue regarding property tax discussions. No formal action was taken.

CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:42a.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Greg Myhre, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Brent Parker, Coordinator