

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: August 25, 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: Interim Auditor/Treasurer Polly Heberlein, Fillmore County Journal Reporter Charlene Selbee, The Caledonia Argus Associate Editor Kaita Gorsuch, Coordinator Brent Parker, EDA Director & Coordinator Support Allison Wagner, Finance Director Carol Lapham, Interim Attorney Suzanne Bublitz, Engineer Brian Pogodzinski, Fiscal Supervisor Heidi Harms, Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO) Executive Director Krista Ross, Houston Librarian Beth Peterson Lee, La Crescent Librarian Jess Witkins, Spring Grove Librarian Jana Halverson, Caledonia Librarian Stephanie Eggert, Hokah Librarian Gina Herman, Assessor Lucas Onstad, and Mikal Sylling

Presiding: Chairperson Myhre

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Wright asked if Coordinator Parker had received any further information from the NO765MN group since the last meeting. Coordinator Parker said he had not received any further information. Commissioner Wright asked that it be added into the minutes that the NO765MN group was going to send further information to the Commissioners. Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion carried to approve the meeting minutes from August 18, 2026. All Commissioners voted yes except for Commissioner Myhre who abstained due to being absent from the meeting.

Public Comment:

None.

APPOINTMENTS

Houston County Librarians, Beth Peterson Lee, Jess Witkins, Jana Halverson, Stephanie Eggert, Gina Herman, and Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO) Executive Director

Krista Ross gave a Houston County Libraries Presentation to the board. They said libraries mattered because they supported access, opportunity, and community wellbeing. The librarians said that libraries were under pressure. Demand was growing faster than capacity to serve it. One major issue was the closing of Baker & Taylor a former major supplier. Other options for materials such as audio materials were much more expensive through other companies. The libraries saw 64,000 annual visits. They had 8,250+ wi-fi and computer users, and 21,500 people had attended programs in the last year. Physical circulation was 111,800 and digital circulation was 19,700. The librarians said libraries were a wise public investment as they supported education, workforce, digital access, wellbeing, and community with their various services. Each librarian shared real community impact stories from the past year they were proud of. Examples included awards Houston Library had received, a produce and seed library in Spring Grove, helping homeschool families in Caledonia, moving to a new space in Hokah, and a Community Conversation series in La Crescent. Houston County funded 27% of the Houston County Libraries funding. Other support included city funding, grants, and other funding sources. The County board thanked the librarians for their service.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Wright moved, Commissioner Schuldt seconded, motion unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda. Approved items are below.

- 1) Review and approve payments. Payments are below.

REQUEST APPROVAL FOR PAYMENTS

2026/08/25 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
BOLTON & MENK INC	26,250.00
CALEDONIA AUTO REPAIR LLC	2,169.68
CALEDONIA OIL CO INC	7,568.00
COMPUTER FORENSIC SERVICES LLC	48,301.41
DAHL AUTOMOTIVE	4,485.20
KNOWBE4 INC	7,864.20
MIENERGY COOPERATIVE	7,274.66
MN POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY	6,791.00
SEACHANGE PRINT INNOVATIONS	2,955.25
	113,659.40
33 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	14,717.62
	128,377.02
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	41,514.74

169,891.76

REVIEW LICENSE CENTER PAYMENTS

2026/08/14 AUDITOR WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
CONSOLIDATED ENERGY COMPANY	8,467.31
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	74,290.27
INSIGHT PUBLIC SECTOR	5,474.63
ISD 300 TREASURER	6,255.25
OFFICE OF MNIT SERVICES	5,762.64
OLMSTED SWCD	2,400.00
TREASURER SCHOOL DISTRICT 239	6,966.45
TREASURER SCHOOL DISTRICT 294	2,320.26
TREASURER TWP OF CALEDONIA	2,181.88
TREASURER TWP OF CROOKED CREEK	9,101.14
TREASURER TWP OF HOKAH	2,976.79
TREASURER TWP OF JEFFERSON	6,559.95
TREASURER TWP OF MONEY CREEK	4,904.18
TREASURER TWP OF MOUND PRAIRIE	6,146.19
TREASURER TWP OF SHELDON	2,771.02
TREASURER TWP OF WINNEBAGO	3,418.02
TREASURER TWP OF YUCATAN	12,577.95
VANCLEAVE/WILLIAM DALE	4,075.28
VISA	18,659.23
WINONA CONTROLS INC	8,545.10
	193,853.54
16 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	12,046.23
	205,899.77

ACTION ITEMS

File No. 1 –Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to accept Brownsville VFW Auxiliary Post 6801 donation of \$200.00 to the Veteran Services Office to use for any veteran’s needs with thanks for the generous donation.

File No. 2 – Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve Detour Agreement between Houston County and the Department of Transportation for Trunk Highway 44 and approve Resolution No. 26-23. Resolution is below.

HOUSTON COUNTY RESOLUTION 26-23

Truck Highway No 44 Detour Agreement Between State of Minnesota and Houston County

IT IS RESOLVED that Houston County enter into MnDOT Agreement No. 1061414 with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation for the following purposes:

To provide for payment by the State to the County for the use and maintenance of County State Aid Highway No. 20 as a detour route during the construction to be performed upon, along, and adjacent to Trunk Highway No. 44 from County State Aid Highway No. 20 to Etch Drive under State Project No. 2804-40 (T.H. 44=044).

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Houston County Board Chair
(Title)

and the Houston County Highway Engineer
(Title)

are authorized to execute the Agreement and any amendments to the Agreement.

File No. 3 – Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Myhre, motion unanimously carried to approve the airport lease agreement for Matt Buley.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Coordinator Parker said he had reached out to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regarding the comment period on the proposed 765 kV transmission line project route. He said it was anticipated that the applicants would submit their route in October. A notice would likely come out in November for comment periods the PUC would hold in December or January. The dates were not set as of yet. The County would continue to follow the process. A Department Head meeting had been held the day prior. The departments had continued with the strategic planning process. A ribbon cutting at the Houston County Airport would be held to celebrate the T-Hangar Project and was scheduled for September 9th at 10:00 a.m. Houston County Public Health was asking residents to take the Community Health Survey. Input helped shape local programs, services, and priorities that support a healthier future for everyone. The survey could be found at www.compassnow.org.

The Commissioners discussed recent and upcoming meetings including a Finance Committee, Root River Watershed One, Community Health Board, and Department Head meeting.

Commissioner Schuldt thanked the County Department Heads for the job that they did.

The Commissioners complimented the Houston County Fair board on a successful 2026 fair.

Commissioner Myhre asked about the County License Center since he had been absent from the BOC meeting a week prior. The County had passed a resolution to discontinue County operation of the License Center and support a successor. A private entity could be a successor. The County would like to see a successor take over and still operate a License Center in the City of Caledonia. The State would evaluate to determine a need and then assuming there was a need the State would advertise for a successor to take over the services. The County would work with the State on a smooth transition. It was the intent of the County to continue to provide the service until a new successor could take over, however the License Center had been temporarily closed due to staffing issues. Operating the License Center required State training and those working in the License Center needed to be approved by the DMV. Staff who were not trained to be able to work in the License Center were unable to work there. Commissioner Schuldt said the County could not simply “plug a body in there”. The County would still be issuing passports. Staff who issued passports were not able to also work with licenses due to rules.

Commissioner Myhre asked about the State sentence to serve program the County used to participate in. The State no longer had the sentence to serve program.

The County board recognized fellow Fillmore County Commissioner, Larry Hindt, who had recently passed away.

Closing Public Comment:

Assessor Onstad shared with the board that the State of Minnesota was holding listening sessions with the public regarding feedback on the property tax system. Information could be found on the Department of Revenue Website. Comments could be sent to the Department of Revenue until and November 1st, 2026.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Zehnder, motion unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 a.m. The next meeting would be a regular meeting on August 25, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Greg Myhre, Chairperson

Attest: _____

Brent Parker, Coordinator