

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: June 16, 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, Finance Director Carol Lapham, Coordinator Brent Parker, EDA Director & Coordinator Support Allison Wagner, Engineer Brian Pogodzinski, Interim Attorney Suzanne Bublitz, Assessor Luke Onstad, Environmental Services Director Amelia Meiners, Donna Buckbee, Chris Priebe, Floyd Hackman, John Haines, Robin Danielson, Eric Danielson, Cindy Crestwell-Hatleli, Scott Hatleli, Bev Hanson, Dean Mierau, Steve Hartwick, Jackie Baker, Supervisor Medicolegal Death Investigators Monica Kendall, Chief Medical Examiner Ross Reichard, and R.L. Christensen

Presiding: Chairperson Myhre

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to approve the meeting minutes from June 2, 2026. There was one misspelled name that would need to be corrected in the minutes.

Commissioner Wright said there was one misspelled name that would need to be corrected in the Workgroup Session minutes. Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Zehnder, motion carried to approve the workgroup session minutes from June 9, 2026 with the correction. All Commissioners voted yes except for Commissioner Myhre who abstained due to being absent from the meeting.

Public Comment:

John Haines said he had recently suggested a moratorium on all sand mine applications. He said after the board had reinstated the half mile density rule a variance had been applied for. He said a comment had been made that sand was needed for roads, construction, and septic systems. Haines said he had done research and did not think sand was needed for roads or septic

systems. He said gravel was what was needed. Haines said he thought there was some truth to sand being needed for construction.

Robin Danielson said she had come to a board meeting a year ago to ask if a Commissioner could attend a Township meeting regarding a vacated alley. She said the Township had wanted the landowner to help pay for the vacated alley. Danielson said her property line was surveyed. She said she had concerns about violations of State law. She invited the Commissioner and County Attorney to attend the next Township meeting.

Cindy Crestwell-Hatleli asked the board to please approve the rezoning request. She said she thought a precedent was already set. She said there was already a residential parcel that bordered it. She said she also had concerns about response times for data requests. She said she had requested hallway data footage and footage from the zoning department and had not yet received it.

Donna Buckbee said she supported the request of her neighbor.

Jackie Baker said she supported Bev Hanson's request. She said zoning ordinance integrity was important. She said zoning policies should be classified correctly from the start. Baker said she was a strong advocate for doing things correctly. She believed the area should be rezoned.

APPOINTMENTS

Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Wright seconded, motion unanimously carried to open a public hearing to consider amending Peddler Ordinance 13 to reflect fee structure change, new requirement for Peddler/Transient Merchant to give bond to the county along with the change in the license period.

Interim Auditor/Treasurer Polly Heberlein said the proposed changes to the Peddler/Transient Merchant license would include changing the \$75 monthly fee to a \$150 yearly fee. The County would also require a bond. The license period would go from 30 days to a one-year timeline. Heberlein said the changes had been discussed previously and the department had done research to see what other counties in the area were doing. The proposed changes would make Houston County consistent with the rules in other counties.

There were no public comments on the matter.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Wright seconded, motion unanimously carried to come out of the public hearing and return to the regular session.

Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion unanimously carried to open a public hearing to consider changing the current On-Sale/Off-Sale 3.2 Beer &

Wine License to an On-Sale Liquor License/Sunday for Pine Creek Golf Course at 3815 N. Pine Creek Rd in La Crescent MN.

Interim Auditor/Treasurer Heberlein said a public hearing was required when changes were requested. She said Pine Creek Golf Course was requesting a full liquor license including Sundays.

No one came forward with a public comment.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Zehnder seconded, motion unanimously carried to come out of the public hearing and return to the regular session.

Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion unanimously carried to open a public hearing to consider an addition of an On-Sale Wine License in conjunction with the current On-Sale/Off-Sale 3.2 Beer License for La Crescent Snowmobile Club at 2485 County 6 in La Crescent MN.

There were no public comments on the matter.

Commissioner Zehnder moved, Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion unanimously carried to come out of the public hearing and return to the regular session.

Chief Medical Examiner Ross Reichard gave the Annual Medical Examiner Report (2025 data) to the Commissioners. He said death certificate information included the cause of death, manner of death, if an autopsy occurred, if the individual was pregnant, Tobacco use, if injury date, time and location and how the injury occurred, if the injury happened at work, and if transportation injury type (e.g. driver, passenger, etc.). He said the information was used by family, relatives, and the Minnesota Department of Health/CDC-Public Health. In Houston County in 2025 the total deaths were 157. Of those deaths, 144 had been reported to the medical examiner. 18 had a complete autopsy and 14 had an external examination. Reichard discussed the manner of deaths with the Commissioners. He said a majority of deaths (131) had occurred naturally. He said this was good data and what a County wanted to see. There had been 12 accidents and one suicide. There had been no homicides or accidents due to motor vehicles. He said there had been one accident that had been due to an accidental drug overdose. The drug had been meth. Reichard said meth was the drug leading overdose deaths in Southeast Minnesota. He said they had also seen alcohol death effects rise since the pandemic. The drug overdose in Houston County had been in the 45-64 age range. Reichard said this was another trend they were seeing as drug overdoses were often happening in older adults instead of younger adults and often were happening to chronic drug users. The board thanked Reichard for the annual report.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Zehnder seconded, motion unanimously carried to go into closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05, Subdivision 2 (b), to discuss preliminary allegations and private personnel data related to an employee grievance. The Commissioners, Coordinator Parker, and Attorney Bublitz attended the closed session.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Zehnder seconded, motion unanimously carried to come out of closed session and return to regular session at 10:58 a.m. Coordinator Parker gave a summary of the closed session saying they had discussed preliminary allegations and private personnel data related to an employee grievance. He said no action had been taken during the closed session.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 1) Approve the following Liquor Licenses from July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027.

LIQUOR LICENCES, WINE AND STRONG BEER

Ferndale Golf, LLC dba Ferndale Golf, LLC (on sale + Sunday)

Ma Cal Grove Country Club, Inc. dba Ma Cal Grove Country Club, Inc. (on sale Sunday) (contingent upon submission of required paperwork)

Par 4 Golf, LLC dba Valley High Golf Club (on/off sale + Sunday)

Shellhorn Enterprises, Inc. dba Shellhorn Bar and Grill (on/off sale + Sunday) (contingent upon submission of required paperwork)

Gasthaus, LLC dba Little Miami (on/off sale + Sunday)

Money Creek Haven Inc dba Money Creek Haven Campground (on/off sale + Sunday)

ON SALE BEER LICENSES

Lawrence Lake Marina, LLC dba Lawrence Lake Marina

Gopher State Sportsmans Club dba Gopher State Sportsmans Club

OFF SALE BEER LICENSE

Lawrence Lake Marina, LLC dba Lawrence Lake Marina

Houston Food Mart dba Houston Food Mart

- 2) Approve a Lower-Potency Hemp Edible Retailer Registration for River Station LLC located in Brownsville MN.
- 3) Approving a Lower-Potency Hemp Edible Retailer Registration for Kwik Trip located in Hokah MN.
- 4) Review and approve payments. Payments are below.

REQUEST APPROVAL FOR PAYMENTS

2026/06/16 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
ACENTEK	5,997.17

ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCAR	8,112.33
BOLTON & MENK INC	6,000.00
BRUENING ROCK PRODUCTS INC	19,057.17
CALEDONIA SNO GOPHERS CLUB	2,269.08
CALEDONIA/CITY OF	15,054.92
ENTERPRISE FM	10,462.64
HILLER COMMERCIAL FLOORS	8,000.00
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	21,309.13
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	61,861.89
JC SMITH INC	5,648.00
KNOW INK	4,125.00
LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING LLC	3,750.65
MEYERS LAWN SERVICE LLC	2,000.00
MIENERGY COOPERATIVE	4,141.61
MN STATE AUDITOR	16,306.50
MN STATE TREASURER	4,424.00
OVERHEAD DOOR COMPANY	3,935.20
PHILLIPS OUTDOOR SERVICES	29,805.59
QUALITY POWER SOLUTIONS	5,565.00
RICHARD'S SANITATION LLC	26,993.41
TRIMIN SYSTEMS INC	2,250.00
VISA	14,809.49
WEX BANK	2,575.89
WEX BANK	2,617.82
WIEBKE TIRE CO	14,001.55
ZIEGLER INC	49,920.00
	350,994.04
60 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	29,321.91
	380,315.95
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	203,834.55
	<u>584,150.50</u>

ACTION ITEMS

File No. 1 – Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve the amendment to Peddler Ordinance #13.

File No. 2 –Motion was made by Commissioner Schuldt, seconded by Commissioner Zehnder, motion unanimously carried to approve the change in Liquor License for Pine Creek Golf Course in La Crescent.

File No. 3 –Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to approve the change in Liquor License for La Crescent Snowmobile Club.

File No. 4 –Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to approve a renewal of a 5-Year Lease with the Dept. of Public Safety, Driver and Vehicle Services for the rental of approximately 360 sq. feet of space in the lower level of the Historic Courthouse which was used for a Driver Exam station. The updated rental amount would total \$1,260.00 per year which would be paid quarterly. The lease would commence on October 1, 2026 and continue through September 30, 2031.

File No. 5 –Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for MNRE 1570 61-US 14, LLC to operate a cannabis business with a medical cannabis endorsement in the Highway Business District in La Crescent Township.

File No. 6 – Commissioners discussed approving or denying a Zoning Amendment for Beverly Hanson to rezone an area from Agriculture Protection District to Residential Yucatan Township with County staff. The Planning Commission had recommended denial of the request. Environmental Services Director Amelia Meiners said there seemed to be some confusion around the request. Meiners said the property itself was in compliance and had been since it was permitted as a CUP many years prior. She said the surrounding acreage was primarily ag. The zoning department had received comments against the change. Commissioner Myhre asked questions about how the property was taxed. Assessor Luke Onstad explained that the property was taxed as residential. He said tax classification was different than zoning district. Tax classification went by the use and this was different from zoning. Commissioner Wright asked why the matter had come up now. The Commissioners discussed concerns about spot zoning. Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion carried three to two, to deny a Zoning Amendment for Beverly Hanson to rezone an area from Agriculture Protection District to Residential Yucatan Township. The Commissioners voted by roll. Commissioners Wright, Johnson, and Zehnder voted yes to deny the request. Commissioners Schuldt and Myhre voted no.

File No. 7 –Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Skyline Materials LTD to expand a quarry for mineral extraction in the Agriculture Protection District in Brownsville Township. Commissioner Wright noted that there were no objections submitted to the zoning office regarding the request.

File No. 8 – Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to adopt an MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) ordinance regulating illicit discharge, pet waste, and construction stormwater within the MS4 boundary that consists of County right of way within the City of La Crescent and a small portion of La Crescent Township.

File No. 9 – Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to deny a Grievance Submitted by Patrick Molling / Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. Local #237. The Commissioners voted by roll. Commissioners Wright, Johnson, Zehnder, Schuldt, and Myhre voted yes.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Coordinator Parker said the County Board of Adjustment and Equalization would be held that evening June 16th at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's room. Coordinator Parker said the County was working with IT to create a data request portal on the new website. Coordinator Parker and the County Attorney would be copied on all data requests going through the portal.

The Commissioners discussed recent and upcoming meetings including a Personnel, Solid Waste, ECB, Jail/Sheriff's Office, SELCO, and Workforce Development meeting.

There would not be a June Planning Commission or Board of Adjustment meeting as no public hearings had been requested.

Closing Public Comment:

Donna Buckbee said it was important to be heard. She said she couldn't always hear people speaking in the room, and when she asked people to speak up it was not meant to be disrespectful.

Cindy Crestwell-Hatleli said she was concerned about the decision made that day. She said Rushford was expanding and was an important town. She said the decision made no sense to her. She said she appreciated those who were in support of the rezone and respected those who were not.

Rebecca Christenson said she lived in a small neighborhood who looked out for one another. She said they were watching closely what was happening in their neighborhood. She said the City of Rushford was totally encased by the City of Rushford Village.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 a.m. The next meeting would be a regular meeting on June 23, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Greg Myhre, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Brent Parker, Coordinator