

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: September 15, 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, Assistant County Attorney Daniel Coogan, Highway Accountant Sheila Schroeder, Engineer Brian Pogodzinski, Fiscal Supervisor Heidi Harms, Public Health Director Jordan Knoke, Interim Recorder Michelle Werner, Sheriff Brian Swedberg, Shari Wiegrefe, Charles Wiegrefe, Andy Allen, and Mikal Sylling

Presiding: Chairperson Myhre

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Prior to any motions being made Action Item No. 7 was pulled from the agenda. Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve the agenda with the change.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to approve the meeting minutes from August 25, 2026.

Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Myhre, motion unanimously carried to approve workgroup session minutes from September 8, 2026.

Public Comment:

None.

APPOINTMENTS

Interim Auditor/Treasurer Heberlein reviewed the County's cash and investments through June 30, 2026 with the Commissioners. Heberlein said the County worked with three banks and two brokers on the County's cash and investments. Investments ranged from 1% to 5.35%. Interest income had reached an all-time high in 2025 of \$540,000. The County was on target to earn around \$500,000 in 2026.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 1) Approve an Exempt Permit for Minnesota Lawful Gambling Application LG220 for ABLE Inc. for gambling (raffle) activities to be conducted at Ma Cal Grove Country Club in Caledonia Township with a drawing to be held on October 24, 2026, with no waiting period.
- 2) Review and approve payments. Payments are below.

REQUEST APPROVAL FOR PAYMENTS

2026/09/01 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCARE	8,112.33
BKC CONSTRUCTION LLC	629,168.24
CDW GOVERNMENT	8,927.88
COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORTATION	9,615.85
DELTA DENTAL	8,122.46
DUNN BLACKTOP COMPANY	663,900.80
GROUND BREAKING CONNECTIONS LLC	7,083.33
IUOE LOCAL 49 FRINGE BENEFIT FUNDS	28,475.00
LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING LLC	3,477.50
MEDICA	256,622.76
MILESTONE MATERIALS	6,092.03
MN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY	2,487.08
RB SCOTT COMPANY, INC	2,997.41
SELCO	50,820.75
VERIZON WIRELESS	8,991.48
WINONA CONTROLS INC	4,594.63
	1,699,489.53
24 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	13,107.51
	1,712,597.04
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	19,456.95
	1,732,053.99

REQUEST APPROVAL FOR PAYMENTS

2026/09/15 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
ACENTEK	4,428.62
BOLTON & MENK INC	10,700.00
CALEDONIA/CITY OF	24,555.75
CDW GOVERNMENT	5,989.53
ELECTION SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE INC	4,106.75
ENTERPRISE FM	9,152.21
HISTORICAL SOCIETY/TREAS OF	18,750.00
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	20,910.13
HOUSTON COUNTY TREASURER	81,922.44
MILESTONE MATERIALS	29,003.36
MINNESOTA ENERGY RESOURCES	2,992.58
MN STATE TREASURER	4,603.00
NUSS TRUCK & EQUIPMENT	21,641.23
QUALITY POWER SOLUTIONS	34,340.00
SCHROEDER LANDSCAPING & CN INC	19,560.00
SYSCO MINNESOTA	2,132.33
TOWMASTER LLC	8,288.32
VISA	15,042.31
WEX BANK	2,277.96
WEX BANK	2,583.08
WS TRUCKING & CONSTRUCTION LLC	8,195.00
	331,174.60
52 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN \$2000.00	26,486.31
	357,660.91
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	150,430.22
	508,091.13

ACTION ITEMS

File No. 1 – Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Myhre, motion unanimously carried to approve a Zoning Amendment for Charles and Sharon Wiegrefe to rezone an area from Agricultural Protection District to Residential District in Caledonia Township with conditions. Environmental Services Director Meiners said this was

recommended by the Planning Commission as the area was directly adjacent to the City of Caledonia, City limits. The Comprehensive Land Use plan encouraged development in or adjacent to urban areas.

File No. 2 – Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to approve a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for David Kingsley to operate a wedding and event venue in the Agriculture Protection District in Money Creek Township with conditions.

File No. 3 – Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to adopt Resolution 26-24 to Submit Plan Renewal Amendment Root River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Resolution is below.

**Resolution 26-24 to Submit Plan Renewal Amendment
Root River
Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan**

Whereas, Houston County resolved to adopt and jointly implement the Root River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan) on January 10, 2017; and

Whereas, Houston County has been an active participant on the Policy Committee to oversee the implementation of the Plan and development of the Plan renewal amendment; and

Whereas, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) approved the Plan on December 14, 2016 with an expiration date of December 31, 2026; and

Whereas, the One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures (BWSR) allow for a plan renewal amendment that results in a new plan expiration date; and

Whereas, the Policy Committee submitted the plan renewal amendment for 60-day formal review on June 10, 2026 and hosted a public hearing on August 24, 2026; and

Whereas, all comments received during the 60-day review and public hearing have been addressed by the Policy Committee; and

Whereas, the Policy Committee recommended that each of the participating boards adopt a resolution supporting the proposed plan renewal amendment at their August 24, 2026 meeting; and

Now Therefore Be it Resolved, Houston County supports submission of the Root River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, plan renewal amendment, to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

File No. 4 – Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve 2026 Wage/Salary/Benefit Budget Amendments.

File No. 5 – Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Zehnder, motion unanimously carried to appoint Kelly Meyer, Dustin Schroeder, and Criag Ihrke to the Economic Development Authority (EDA) board (three-year terms).

File No. 6 – The Commissioners discussed the possibility of having a competitive search for Deputy Auditor Treasurer 1 FTE with Coordinator Parker and Interim Auditor/Treasurer Heberlein. The Auditor/Treasurer's office typically had six total employees with two working on auditor duties, two working on treasurer duties, and two working in the license center. Additionally temporary 67 day employees were hired to help with elections and Heberlein said those who worked on the election were caught up and doing a great job. The license center had been short staffed with staff who typically worked on other duties working in the license center. The County planned to close the license center once the State had found a successor. The tentative timeline for the transition was the end of the year. Coordinator Parker said by the time someone was hired, trained, and had a background check the license center could be closed. Interim Auditor/Treasurer Heberlein said background checks from the State typically took several weeks to complete. Hiring an additional Deputy Auditor Treasurer would be an additional staff member for the office once the license center closed and add to the levy. Commissioner Wright said her primary focus was helping the license center through the transition. She suggested the possibility of temporary part-time help for the license center. Coordinator Parker said one employee was helping half days with tabs and vehicle transfers three days a week. A meeting was scheduled that day with Beacon Schneider to see how they could assist with the Auditor duties temporarily. This would not be an additional cost to the County, as they were helping under their current contract. County staff from the Recorder's Office and Surveyor's Office would provide extra assistance in the interim with land transfers and splits. Commissioner Wright said an additional full-time position added to the office should be evaluated and should go through the position justification process just as other positions did. Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to table the matter until further research could be done on the need for an additional position.

File No. 7 – This item was removed from the agenda.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

The Commissioners discussed the County budget. The preliminary levy would need to be set at the next meeting on September 22, 2026. Commissioner Schuldt said he was hearing that taxpayers did not want a levy that was much more than the year before. He said departments needed to decide what in their budgets were needs and wants. Commissioner Johnson said he had looked at the preliminary numbers (that were higher than the year prior) and did the math to decrease the initial preliminary number by 4%. He suggested cuts to the Jail, Sheriff's office, Road and Bridge, and Human Services budgets telling department heads they could decide what items to cut to get to the desired number. Commissioner Myhre said some cuts would need to be

made. Departments shared concerns about sustainability and shared that costs were anticipated to be even higher in 2028. Surrounding areas were also seeing an increase in preliminary budget numbers. Commissioner Johnson said he did not take any pleasure in finding cuts to the budget, but that every County was doing it.

The Commissioners discussed recent and upcoming meetings and events including a SCHSAC, Solid Waste, Extension, Workforce Development, Gravel Bike Race, Semcac, Bluff County Collaborative Career and Technical Education Day, and La Crescent City Council meeting.

Commissioners Zehnder, Schuldt, Myhre and some County Staff had attended the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Houston County Airport. Commissioner Zehnder thanked staff for their work on the project and said the project had been a success.

Closing Public Comment:

None.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Schuldt, seconded by Commissioner Zehnder, motion unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m. The next meeting would be a regular meeting on September 22, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Greg Myhre, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Brent Parker, Coordinator