

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: August 11, 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:

The Caledonia Argus Associate Editor Kaita Gorsuch, Finance Director Carol Lapham, Coordinator Brent Parker, EDA Director & Coordinator Support Allison Wagner, Interim Attorney Suzanne Bublitz, Fiscal Supervisor Heidi Harms, and Highway Accountant Sheila Schroeder

Board Workgroup Session

The board discussed having a Central Finance Department at the County with Finance Director Lapham, Fiscal Supervisor Harms, and Accountant Schroeder. This was something that had been discussed for some time, and a future central finance group had been meeting to work out the details. They shared with the Commissioners a chart showing what positions would serve as backup to what positions if someone were out. Lapham, Harms, and Schroeder would each cover for one another if any of them needed to be out. The future central finance group was working on processes and procedures. Coordinator Parker said currently payroll was out of the HR office, and payroll was a finance function. Coordinator Parker said every other week, time that could be spent on HR was being used for payroll taking away from the HR Department.

The Commissioners discussed the current operation of the Houston County License Center, including an overview of available service delivery models authorized under Minnesota law, operational considerations, and potential future options for the Board's consideration with Coordinator Parker. Coordinator Parker said historically the license center had been hard to staff, and was currently understaffed. It was anticipated that the license center would lose \$30,000 in 2026, and had been losing money in previous years. The board discussed the possibility of the license center being privately operated instead of being operated by the County. Coordinator Parker said the County could choose to discontinue Houston County's operation of Deputy Registrar and Driver's License Services. If the County discontinued services, the State would evaluate to see if there was a need in the County to continue the services and if a need was determined the State would advertise and bids would be received to take over the service. If the State determined there was not a need for continued services the County could choose to continue to operate the Houston County License Center, so the public would still be provided the service. Coordinator Parker said the next step would be for the County to pass a resolution and notify the State if they wanted to discontinue services. From there the County could work with the State and continue to operate until a proper transition could be made. It was the general consensus of the Commissioners to move forward with the process, and to continue working closely with the State.

It was the general consensus of the Commissioners that if the County discontinued service they would want to make the transition as smooth as possible for the public.

The Commissioners discussed County board communications both internally and externally. Commissioner Johnson said it was okay for Commissioners to tell people they were unsure or did not know the answer to questions until proper research could be done, or the correct person could be asked. Commissioner Zehnder said in speaking to constituents he often shared his opinion but did not speak on behalf of the entire board unless he knew how everyone else felt or there was a general consensus on the matter.

The workgroup session ended at 10:20 a.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Greg Myhre, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Brent Parker, Coordinator