PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: October 6, 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 County Attorney Suzanne Bublitz, Public Health Director Jordan Knoke, Environmental Services Director Amelia Meiners, Sheriff Brian Swedberg, Engineer Brian Pogodzinski, Financial Assistance Director Karen Kohlmeyer, and City of La Crescent Community Development Director Larry Kirch

Presiding: Chairperson Myhre

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to approve the meeting minutes from September 22, 2026.

Public Comment:

None.

APPOINTMENTS

City of La Crescent, Community Development Director, Larry Kirch, gave a Root River Trail Extension - Citizens Exploratory Committee 2025-2026 presentation to the board. The committee who had been working on the expansion of the Root River Bike Trail had applied to various funding applications and grant opportunities in 2025 and 2026. The scoring on grant applications continued to get better although several grants had not been awarded. The committee would most likely try to apply again in the future. Thus far the only grant funds that had been awarded were for planning and designing the trail, but not for the actual trail. The committee was still waiting to hear back on possible Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) funding. The committee hoped to use multiple funding sources to eventually complete the trail

and connect La Crescent, Hokah, and Houston with the trail. Currently the group was operating under a Memorandum of Agreement to Jointly Cooperate on the project. The group had been working on a Houston County Root River Trail Joint Powers Board agreement that would replace the Memorandum of Agreement. The Joint Powers agreement would be helpful for when the group received funding. Each city and the County would appoint an elected official to serve on the Joint Powers Board.

In a presentation on a separate topic, Kirch from the City of La Crescent also gave a Recap of the USA Gravel National Championship in La Crescent and Houston to the board. Kirch said there had been 700 bikers in the race. Kirch said the event was better coordinated than the year before. He thanked the County and the Townships for their participation in the event. 2026 had been the last year for the contracted event. In 2027 the race would be held in another state.

At 9:53 a.m. Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Zehnder seconded, motion unanimously carried to enter a 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, Sheriff Swedberg, and LELS representative Rick Mathwig attended the closed session. At 11:31 a.m. Commissioner Johnson moved, Commissioner Schuldt seconded, motion unanimously carried to return to regular session. Coordinator Parker gave a summary of the closed session saying they had entered into a closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05, Subdivision 2 (b), to discuss preliminary allegations and private personnel data related to an employee grievance. After discussing the matter, the grievance was denied.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

1) Hire Sean Feind as a 67-day Deputy Auditor / Treasurer (B22 - Step 1) effective immediately.
2) This item was moved to action items.
3) Hire Tracy Jones as an Eligibility Worker with a start date of October 12th (B24 - Step 2).
4) Update the Liquor License “type” that was approved in June of 2026 for the La Crescent Snowmobile Club at 2485 County 6 in La Crescent MN. (In June of 2026, there was a request to add On-Sale Wine License in conjunction with their current On-Sale/Off-Sale 3.2 Beer License. Based on the type of kitchen located at the Snowmobile Club, it was discovered that they didn’t qualify for the previously approved license type.) They were now requesting a full Club On-Sale Retail Liquor License.
5) Review and approve payments. Payments are below.

REQUEST APPROVAL FOR PAYMENTS

2026/10/06 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
ADVANCED CORRECTIONAL HEALTHCAR	8,599.07
BKC CONSTRUCTION LLC	270,902.74
BOLTON & MENK INC	2,250.00
BRUENING ROCK PRODUCTS INC	3,952.68
CALEDONIA OIL CO INC	8,880.00
CONSOLIDATED ENERGY COMPANY	5,850.00
DELTA DENTAL	8,122.46
GOODYEAR TIRE & RUBBER CO	4,403.40
GROUNDBREAKING CONNECTIONS LLC	7,083.33
IUOE LOCAL 49 FRINGE BENEFIT FUNDS	28,475.00
MEDICA	252,735.80
MN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY	2,488.68
MNCCC	13,936.25
NORTHERN WOOD PRODUCTS	2,600.00
SEACHANGE PRINT INNOVATIONS	7,331.63
VERIZON WIRELESS	4,317.32
WIEBKE TIRE CO	3,331.80
WINONA CONTROLS INC	4,708.38
	639,968.54
26 VENDORS PAID LESS THAN $2000.00	8,745.77
	648,714.31
PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	55,926.47
	704,640.78

ACTION ITEMS

File No. 1 – Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wright, motion unanimously carried to approve the Houston County Root River Trail Joint Powers Board agreement. The Commissioners voted by roll. All Commissioners voted yes.

File No. 2 – Motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion unanimously carried to approve a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Justin and Crystal Lewis for a single-family non-farm dwelling on less than 40 acres in an Agricultural Protection District in Black Hammer Township with conditions.

File No. 3 – Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Schuldt, motion unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 26-28 to approve the Prioritized Bridge Replacement list. Resolution is below.

RESOLUTION 2026-28
Prioritized Bridge Replacement List

WHEREAS, Houston County has reviewed the pertinent data on bridges requiring replacement, rehabilitation, or removal, supplied by local citizenry and local units of government, and

WHEREAS, Houston County has identified those bridges that are high priority and that require replacement, rehabilitation, or removal within the next five years;

NOW, THERFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following bridges are high priorities for replacement, major rehabilitation, or removal and Houston County intends to replace, rehabilitate, or remove these bridges as soon as possible when funds are available; and

Old Bridge #	Road # or Name	Crossing	LPI	Total Project Cost	Township or State Bridge Funds Requested	Federal Funds	Local or State Aid Funds	Proposed Construction Year
28J74	West Beaver Road	Dry run	NA	162,647.00	142,647.00	-	20,000.00	2027
6937	CR 249	Dry Run	49	424,000.00	212,000.00	-	212,000.00	2027
L9502	Pfeffer Valley Road	Stream	62	390,600.00	370,600.00	-	20,000.00	2028
NA	Muhle Coulee Road	Dry Run	NA	369,600.00	349,600.00		20,000.00	2028
L3968	Sylling Road	Dry Run	59	390,600.00	370,600.00	-	20,000.00	2029
				1,737,447.00	1,445,447.00	-	292,000.00	

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Houston County does hereby request authorization to replace, rehabilitate, or remove such bridges; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Houston County does hereby request financial assistance with eligible approach grading and engineering costs on township bridges, as provided by law.

File No. 4 – Prior to any motions being made the Commissioners discussed the possibility of approving a competitive search for a .8 FTE EDA Director / County Coordinator Administrative Assistant. Commissioner Myhre said he had wanted the item to be moved from the consent agenda to action items because the County would need to make some cuts. Commissioner Wright said the Economic Development Authority position was a needed position by the County. Coordinator Parker said the current contract for EDA & Coordinator Support services would be expiring at the end of the year. The position had been evaluated, and the Personnel Committee had determined the position would be better suited as an in-house position rather than a contracted service. There was also an anticipated cost savings to the County by making the position a County employee. Commissioners Myhre and Schuldt served on the Personnel Committee. Motion was made by Commissioner Zehnder, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, motion carried to approve a competitive search for a .8 FTE EDA Director / County Coordinator Administrative Assistant. Commissioners Wright, Johnson, Zehnder, and Schuldt voted yes. Commissioner Myhre voted no.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Coordinator Parker said he had recently attended an AMC conference. One of the upcoming topics AMC would be discussing with counties would be power lines.

The Commissioners discussed recent and upcoming meetings and events including a Wildcat, Department Head, EDA, Safety, ECB, Planning Commission, SELCO, and Design Team event with the City of Houston.

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 11:33 a.m. The next meeting would be a workgroup session on October 13, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Greg Myhre, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Brent Parker, Coordinator