

DRAFT
PROCEEDINGS OF THE MURRAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MURRAY
COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER - SLAYTON, MINNESOTA
February 17, 2026, 8:30 AM

Pursuant to notice, the Murray County Board of Commissioners convened with the following members present in person: Commissioners; Loy Woelber, Jackie Meier, Mark Carlson, Dennis Welgraven and Roger Zins. Also Present in person were HR Director/Deputy Administrator Sharon Giese, and General Assistant Renee Gleason; County Attorney Travis Smith via Zoom.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER APPROXIMATELY 8:30 A.M.

1.1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2.1. AGENDA ADDITIONS

The Board Chair asked if there were any additions to the agenda:

- Commissioner Carlson would like to add "Permission to Silent Spectrum to install a communication board in park near high school. This will be added as Agenda Item 4.11.2.
- Commissioners commented a motion needs to be passed to have a quorum of Board Members attend the Monogram Foods Tour, on February 19, 2026 @ 1:00 p.m. This will be added as Agenda Item 4.11.3.

2.2. IDENTIFY ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Board Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest, none were identified.

It was moved by Commissioner Welgraven, seconded by Commissioner Zins, to approve amended agenda. Motion passed.

3.1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM 02/03/2026

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, second by Commissioner Woelber, to approve the meeting minutes for 02/03/2026. Motion passed.

3.2. COMMISSIONER WARRANTS

It was moved by Commissioner Welgraven, seconded by Commissioner Meier to approve all claims as presented and were approved for payment. The Board Chair was authorized to sign the Audit List dated 2/17/2026 with fund totals of \$84,136.26 and warrants numbered 179243 through 179310:

General	\$57,558.84
Road and Bridge	24,117.48
EDA	39.28
Ditch	283.71
Sunrise Terrace Housing	1,069.98
SAWS	<u>1,066.97</u>
TOTAL	\$84,136.26

4.1. SOIL & WATER QUARTERLY ALLOCATION REQUEST - SHELLY LEWIS

Shelly Lewis of Murray County Soil & Water Quarterly Allocation Request and report for October-December 2025. Also provided an organizational and staff tasks update.

January-26 Operations Account	Murray SWCD Treasurer Report										
Beginning Balance	\$	916,161.29									
Deposits	\$	1,331.55									
Expense	\$	78,821.38									
Ending Balance	\$	838,671.46									
CDs	\$	-									
Sweep Account	\$	64,125.33									
Grants:											
FY2022 Capacity Grant	\$	-									
FY2023 Capacity Grant	\$	32,158.42									
FY25 Soil Health Delivery Grant	\$	38,687.70									
FY24 Buffer Grant	\$	9,713.45									
FY25 Buffer Grant	\$	25,000.00									
FY26/27 Conservation Delivery	\$	36,470.00									
FY26 Soil Health Practices	\$	180,000.00									
Ending Balance-Operations Account	\$	1,224,826.36									
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Cash Available for General Operations</td><td>\$</td><td>902,796.79</td></tr> <tr> <td>Cash Restricted, Committed or Assigned</td><td>\$</td><td>322,029.57</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>\$</td><td>1,224,826.36</td></tr> </table>			Cash Available for General Operations	\$	902,796.79	Cash Restricted, Committed or Assigned	\$	322,029.57	Total	\$	1,224,826.36
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Cash Restricted, Committed or Assigned	\$	322,029.57									
Total	\$	1,224,826.36									
Cost-Share Savings Account	\$	27,346.00									
Deposit	\$	-									
Expense	\$	-									
Ending Balance	\$	27,346.00									
FY26/27 Conservation Contracts	\$	21,876.80									
FY26/27 T&A available	\$	5,469.20									
Ending Balance	\$	27,346.00									
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Cash Available for General Operations</td><td>\$</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr> <td>Cash Restricted, Committed or Assigned</td><td>\$</td><td>27,346.00</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>\$</td><td>27,346.00</td></tr> </table>			Cash Available for General Operations	\$	-	Cash Restricted, Committed or Assigned	\$	27,346.00	Total	\$	27,346.00
Cash Available for General Operations	\$	-									
Cash Restricted, Committed or Assigned	\$	27,346.00									
Total	\$	27,346.00									
Total		\$1,252,172.36									

Commissioner Welgraven asked if we have used the Missouri Valley funding? Yes, we have utilized those funds in the SW portion of the county with a couple waterway and basin projects.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Welgraven, to approve the Murray Soil and Water Conservation District quarterly allocation request in the amount of \$49,069.75.

4.2. 8:45 A.M. PUBLIC HEARING: TIM & JEAN RUNKLE TAX ABATEMENT REQUEST

Public Hearing opened at 8:45 a.m.

Murray County has received a request for tax abatement through the Murray County Home Initiative. Tim & Jean Runkle own a bare lot at 204 South Delaware Court, Fulda, MN, and plan to construct a new home on the property. The home will be their primary residence with construction to begin this spring. The new home value is approximately \$434,000.00. 18-881-6241

No public comments were presented.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve the Murray County Home Initiative Tax Abatement for Tim & Jean Runkle on property located at 204 South Delaware Court, Fulda, MN 56131 (PIN #25-340-0120). Motion passed.

Public Hearing closed at 8:46 a.m.

4.3. 9:00 A.M. PUBLIC BID OPENING: HORTICULTURE BUILDING REMODEL PROJECT

It was budgeted and approved solicit bids for an addition on the Horticulture building along with updating the lighting, adding overhead doors, walk doors and concrete access to the building. This building

The (3) addendums issued as part of this bidding process were reviewed. Murray County received (2) bids:

Greg Arp Construction: \$339,270.97, including addendums

Joe Schreier Construction: \$296,510.00, including addendums

The amount budgeted was \$235,000.00. Both bids are over budget. Heidi Winter confirmed there are additional capital improvement funds for us to cover the overage and/or we could rearrange funding to accommodate this project.

This building leaks significantly and cannot be used for vendors and events. There are several fairground building projects warranted in the future: Heritage Hall - needs siding and shingles; Round Barn - paint, siding and repair but may be able to get some grant funds because it is on the National Historic Registry.

Commissioner Zins understands it being over budget but felt it is important to maintain current buildings vs. considering building new ones.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Meier to award the bid for the horticulture building addition and remodel to Joe Schreier Construction for \$296,510.00 from account 01-110-115-0000-6640. Motion passed.

4.4.1. DITCH BILLS

It was moved by Commissioner Welgraven, seconded by Commissioner Woelber to approve the report of bills for payment of the Murray County Drainage Authority as follows. Motion passed.

Bolton & Menk

21-706-6260	CD 41	4,600.00	CD 41 Improvement - Engineering
21-861-6260	JD 27	850.00	JD 27 Partial Abdn-Engineering
	Subtotal	5,450.00	

Lyon County Auditor-Treasurer (Cross County Ditch Expense)

21-847-6312	JD 20A	27,391.80	2025 Shared Ditch Expenses	49.94%
21-861-6312	JD 27	649.49	2025 Shared Ditch Expenses	15.37%
	Subtotal	28,041.29		

Redwood County Auditor-Treasurer (Cross County Ditch Expense)

21-863-6312	JD 28	164.43	2025 Shared Ditch Expenses	20.290%
	Subtotal	164.43		

Total Ditch Bills 33,655.72

4.5.1. DES MOINES RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP COST-SHARE

The Des Moines River Watershed Partnership (DMRWP) offers a 50% cost-share program for the sealing of unused and/or abandoned wells in Murray County within the Des Moines River Watershed. Jean Chrisoffels further clarified the costs are approximately \$1,800.00. But there is a possibility the cost of the well sealing could be more or less. Therefore, it is recommended to state 50% vs. a dollar amount in the motion. Heidi Winter clarified they will include the backup documentation to assure them it is 50% of the total amount.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Meier to recommend the Des Moines River Watershed Partnership (DMRWP) approve Theodore Wand's cost-share application for sealing an unused well on his property in the NE1/4, Section 20, Bondin Township (T105N R40W), Murray County (PIN #02.020.001.0), and upon completion, to recommend the DMRWP approve payment from the Des Moines River Watershed's FY23-25 Watershed Based Implementation Funds to Theodore Wand for 50% of the total cost.

4.6.1. CITY LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT CONTRACTS

Heath Landsman explained one of the seven contracts has not been returned yet but suggested we proceed with approval and will have the Board Chair sign once received. Board agreed this was acceptable. Commissioner Loy inquired about what these contracts entail. Contracts in place to be able to provide law enforcement support as well as enforce the individual city ordinances. The rate charged is \$10.00 per citizen based off the city's population.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Welgraven, to approve the law enforcement support city contracts with Avoca, Chandler, Currie, Dovray, Hadley, Iona, Lake Wilson, and authorize the Board Chair and Sheriff to sign the contracts on behalf of the county. Motion passed.

Commissioner Welgraven inquired about being fully staffed and now being able to provide a deputy to attend city council meetings in Murray County. Heath Landsman confirmed deputy assignments have been made. The city councils really appreciate Murray County Sheriff Department representation at the meetings.

4.7.1. MURRAY COUNTY MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION UPDATE

The Murray County Mutual Aid Association meeting was held on February 3, 2026. Highlights of those discussions include:

- It was moved and passed by the association to have Carl Nyquist assist this association with scheduling meetings and coordinating logistics. This is a formality as he has been doing this anyway and is a value add for the association.
- The county allocates \$3000 a year to this association and goes into account to supplement dry hydrants, volunteer training and drills, etc. Currently, there are two dry hydrants near Buffalo Lake and Avoca that are non-operational. This work will occur in spring and should be covered by the association funds. If not, Carl will investigate additional grants. The Fox Lake dry hydrant will be decommissioned. But there is another dry hydrant nearby. Carl will be reviewing all dry hydrants to make sure they are set up and operate consistently for each fire department.
- Fire State Aid: Each of the departments were advised this had not been reviewed in several years. Therefore, each department will bring their data to the next meeting. It will be reviewed and implemented.
- The County Emergency Manager, in coordination with Region 5 Emergency Management, is working to develop H.E.R.T. (Hostile Event Response and Communication) training. The goal is to have this training available by the end of 2026.
- eDispatch update rolled out for page numbers and radios.
- Cell phone Issues - Chandler the service has been difficult in the last (3) weeks and Fulda has been difficult for the last 8 months to a year. Fulda has gone to a 5G tower on Friday and the Chandler tower is being worked on and should be fully operational by end of this week.
- Additional UPDATE not on agenda: Notified this morning a lot of DHS programming has been paused. Some of these programs include:
 - FEMA/Disaster funding
 - EMPG Grant - supplements county's EMS dept
 - Hazard Mitigation — fortunately, this plan has been completed but the funding has now been halted for the projects identified within this plan
 - National Flood Insurance Program
 - Recreational Boating Safety Activities

*Board delayed moving further on Carl's agenda items and going back to agenda Item 4.3.
9:00 a.m. Public Bid Opening: Horticulture Building Remodel Project.*

When revisiting Carl Nyquist agenda items, there was additional discussion on the Mutual Aid Association. Commissioner Woelber would like to understand the following:

- Abandoning dry hydrant at Fox Lake. Carl reiterated that the concern isn't necessarily fixing the hydrant, but the vegetation is encroaching the area and is difficult to get fire equipment in the area anyway. The cost of a new dry hydrant is approximately \$6,000. In addition to the DNR permitting process is about \$1,200. Since there is an alternative dry hydrant in the area, the decision was to abandon.
- Murray County concerns with Balaton dispatch: Fire calls in the Garvin area with the previous cell phone service would go to Lyon County for EMS and there are redundant street/avenue addresses in Lyon and Murray County. So you have incorrect departments being dispatched. Coverage map has since been corrected.

4.7.2. PANIC BUTTON PRICING

The Murray County Safety Committee evaluated current security measures and identified the need for an enhanced, reliable emergency notification system within county facilities. This should enhance employee safety, reduce response times during emergencies, mitigate liability risks, and strengthen the County's overall emergency preparedness posture. As a result of that review, the committee recommended implementation of a mobile cellular panic button system to strengthen workplace safety. Panic buttons will be placed throughout the county buildings. The initial equipment cost is \$1,550.00 and then \$33.95 monthly thereafter.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Woelber, to approve the purchase and implementation of the Heartland Security Mobile Cellular Panic Button hardware system for designated Murray County government facilities, including the Courthouse (courtrooms and clerk areas), Sheriff's Office, Auditor's Office, Assessor's Office, License Center, Commissioner Room, and Extension Office.

4.7.3. EMERGENCY ALERTING PLATFORM

There were (3) potential platforms reviewed to replace CodeRed by Carl Nyquist and Heath Landsman. Functionality, setup, and costs were considered. Regardless of replacement system chosen, there will be an approximate \$4,800.00 savings replacing CodeRed.

The HyperReach Alerting System will provide IPAWS compliance, multi-channel alerting (voice, SMS, email), and a user-friendly interface suitable for county emergency management operations. Funding will be drawn from 911 funds account 283-283-6342. Ongoing management of the program will be overseen by the Murray County EMS Director.

Motion was made by Commissioner Woelber, seconded by Commissioner Welgraven, to approve the purchase and implementation of the HyperReach Alerting System to replace CodeRED as Murray County's emergency notification platform. Motion passed.

We should be able to have the system in place within 2-3 weeks.

4.8.1. 2026 PC AND LAPTOP PURCHASES

The following PC's laptops will be updated as they have approached our 5yr+ rotation mark. There are expected technology pricing increases coming. IT, Highway, and Ditch budgets/accounts will be utilized. We have been purchasing HP equipment but have had quality/warranty issues. The feedback from surrounding counties, Dell has been a good vendor for quality and pricing.

- 7 PCs (\$7,525.28)
- 1 Workstation PC (\$3,577.69) - CAD/Grant's computer, \$1,000 increase price from last year
- 5 Laptops (\$5,806.55)
- 6 Rugged Laptops (\$14,852.84)
- 1 Laptop Workstation (\$1,780.54)
- 11 Laptop Docking Stations (\$2,725.91)

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Meier to approve purchasing the listed computers and laptops through Dell for \$36,269.81, without the tax included in the quote. Motion passed.

4.8.2. COUNTY PHONE SYSTEM REPLACEMENT

Murray County has been experiencing issues with our outdated phone system, which led us to being without phone service for two days. We had anticipated replacing and budgeted for this for 2026. But with the more recent issues, we should implement it sooner. The existing phone system is no longer in production, and no new parts are available.

- Unable to obtain support services due to system age.
- Recurring issues with current line provider, Frontier.
- New system is cloud based, and there is no main equipment to maintain.
- Several phones are free through the new offer, significantly reducing switchover costs.
- Integrated with Microsoft Teams, simple interface, and reasonably priced support offerings available.

This is a hosted phone system that eliminates some equipment and reduces costs by \$500 - 600 a month and provides system support. This system is through the State of MN and is a redundant system, so if one part goes down, the backup route will be utilized.

Loeffler does support some of our other equipment and has been very good to work with in troubleshooting. Also being a cloud based system, our capabilities and flexibility will be greater.

It was moved by Commissioner Welgraven, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve the Proposal/Quote # 017792 from Loffler for the Elevate UC Phone System. Motion passed.

The amount for 2026 budgeted was \$25,000.00 so we are significantly under budget.

4.9.1. COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAY FUNDS ADVANCE RESOLUTION

We have a larger than usual construction year planned for 2026. This advance resolution will reserve additional State Aid funding from the 2027 allocation for the 2026 construction projects. By combining projects/funds we can get better pricing. Implementing this advance because of scheduling.

Motion was made by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Welgraven to pass/approve the County State Aid Highway Funds Advancement Resolution for \$2,500,000. Motion passed.

4.9.2. MASON TOWNSHIP SEAL COAT AGREEMENT

Mason Township has requested to have Lake Shetek Drive seal coated and fog sealed with Murray County's 2026 Seal Coat & Fog Seal construction contract. Since we are seal coating in the area, the township has opted to have this road included.

Motion was made by Commissioner Zins and seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve and sign the Agreement for Road Seal Coat & Fog Seal Services with Mason Township. Motion passed.

4.9.3. FINAL PAYMENT FOR THE 2025 OVERLAY PROJECTS

This is the final payment to releasing the retainage for the 2025 overlay projects.

Motion was made by Commissioner Meier and seconded by Commissioner Woelber to approve the final payment to Central Specialties, Inc. for the 2025 overlay projects in the amount of \$111,268.50. Motion passed.

4.9.4. APPROVE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT WITH MIDWEST CONTRACTING, LLC FOR CULVERT PROJECT SAP 051-638-033

Construction contract was presented with Midwest Contracting, LLC for culvert project SAP 051-638-033 on CSAH 38 Shetek Twp Sec. 22/23 between CSAH 17 and 211th St.

This is the culvert project on CSAH 38 north of Currie at Robbins Slough.

Motion was made by Commissioner Zins and seconded by Commissioner Welgraven to approve the construction contract with Midwest Contracting LLC for project SAP 051-638-033 for \$122,521.70. Motion passed.

4.10.1. COUNTY PROPERTY DISCUSSION

BOARD CHAIR CALLED RECESS AT APPROXIMATELY 9:45 A.M. TO MOVE INTO WORK SESSION.

MEETING CALLED BACK TO ORDER AT APPROXIMATELY 10:30 A.M.

4.10.2. BROADBAND

BOARD CHAIR CALLED RECESS AT APPROXIMATELY 11:15 A.M. TO MOVE INTO WORK SESSION.

MEETING CALLED BACK TO ORDER AT APPROXIMATELY 11:20 A.M.

4.11.1. POTENTIAL ADVANCEMENT OF MOTOR POOL GARAGE PROJECT AND BIDS

Related to the discussions in the work session today regarding county property and future plans, the board will "hold" on the Motor Pool Garage project.

A motion was made by Commissioner Woelber, seconded to Commissioner Welgraven to refuse/deny all submitted bids for the Motor Pool Garage Project. Motion passed.

4.11.2. SILENT SPECTRUM COMMUNICATION BOARD INSTALLATION

Dareth (Nelson) Ross of Silent Spectrum is requesting to install a communication board at the park near MCC. However, they hope to raise enough funds to install these in all county and city parks.

The boards are geared toward semi- or non-verbal people, primarily children, who have Autism Spectrum Disorder. They contain simple pictures, graphics, letters and numbers to help with non-verbal communication. Graphics include things like sad, hurt, thirsty, hungry, up, down, help, bathroom, Mom/Dad, home and more. The graphics are currently being created, and the boards will be printed by B&K Design. Posts and hardware to hold the signs will be obtained locally.



Motion by Commissioner Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve the installation of Silent Spectrum communication boards at any Murray County park. The boards will be installed and maintained by Silent Spectrum. Motion passed.

4.11.3. BOARD OF COMMISSIONER TOUR: MONOGRAM FOODS 1:00 P.M. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

Moved by Commissioner Welgraven, seconded by Commissioner Meier to approve the Murray County Board of Commissioners to attend the tour of Monogram Foods, Chandler, MN on February 19, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

4.11.4. 10:30 A.M. PUBLIC HEARING: JD 27 WITH JOINT BOARD - REROUTE, IMPOUND, PARITALLY ABANDON

Moved by Commissioner Welgraven, seconded by Commissioner Meier to approve the Murray County Board of Commissioners to attend the tour of Monogram Foods, Chandler, MN on February 19, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

STATE OF MINNESOTA
JOINT DRAINAGE AUTHORITY BOARD FOR MURRAY AND LYON COUNTIES
DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR MURRAY/LYON JUDICIAL DITCH 27

In the Matter of the Petitions of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to Modify and Impound Waters upon a Portion of Murray/Lyon Judicial Ditch 27, Branch A (103E.227); and to Abandon a Portion of Murray/Lyon Judicial Ditch 27, Branches A-1 and B (103E.806)

**FINDINGS AND ORDER GRANTING PETITION
TO MODIFY AND IMPOUND DRAINAGE
SYSTEM WATERS AND PARTIALLY ABANDON
A PORTION OF JUDICIAL DITCH 27**

At a duly noticed and held public hearing conducted by the Joint County Drainage Authority for Murray and Lyon Counties on February 17, 2026, sitting as the joint county drainage authority for Judicial Ditch 27 ("JD 27"), having received a petition to modify and impound drainage system waters pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 103E.227 and partially abandon portions of JD 27 pursuant to Statutes, section 103E.806 by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, having noticed and conducted a public hearing on the engineer's report of findings, and based on the record and proceedings, Commissioner Zins moved, seconded by Commissioner Welgraven to adopt the following Findings and Order:

Findings:

1. The Murray and Lyon Counties Joint County Drainage Authority ("Drainage Authority") is the public drainage authority for Murray and Lyon Counties Judicial Ditch 27.
2. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources ("DNR") filed a Petition to impound, reroute, and divert drainage system waters pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 103E.227 and filed a second Petition to partially abandon a drainage system pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 103E.806 dated February 28, 2025, with the Murray County Auditor's office.
3. The Petitions were filed on March 4, 2025.
4. The DNR would like to impound water on land owned by the DNR for the benefit of wildlife and flood mitigation (the "Project").
5. The impoundment involves partial abandonment and rerouting of JD 27.

6. The Petition includes maps depicting the location of the existing JD 27 drainage system, and the portions of the system proposed to be abandoned and rerouted. Specifically, the Petition includes the following modifications to the JD 27 drainage system:
 - a. The Project area ("Project Area") includes Branches A, A-1, and B located in Section 3 of Lake Sarah Township in Murray County.
 - b. The existing JD 27 Branch A tile in the area of the proposed reroute is a 6-inch and 8-inch diameter tile. The Branch A tile makes an "L" shape through the proposed construction area. The proposed reroute of the tile is at more of a diagonal direction. The length of pipe needed to reroute the JD 27 Branch A tile around the proposed wetland is less than the existing pipe length and will have a steeper grade, also the entire length is proposed to be replaced with 8-inch diameter pipe. Therefore, the reroute will cause no substantial impact to the function of the JD 27 Branch A tile.
 - c. The Project requires the abandonment of a portion of the JD 27 drainage system, along with additional rerouting and impounding of system waters in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, sections 103E.806 and 103E.227. Specifically, partial abandonment of the Branch A-1 tile is necessary to feed water into the proposed 3 acre northerly wetland. The existing Branch A-1 tile is a 6-inch diameter pipe. It will be replaced with 6-inch tile and 8-inch tile and abandoned between a discharge point to the wetland and Branch A. This abandonment is necessary to feed water into the wetland. Therefore, the abandonment will cause no substantial impact to the function of the JD 27 Branch A-1 tile.
 - d. The Project requires the abandonment of the JD 27 Branch B tile which is approximately 70 feet in length and is necessary to create a second 0.65 acre wetland in the southeast corner of the property. This abandonment is necessary to create the wetland and install a new overflow intake. Therefore, the abandonment will cause no substantial impact to the function of the JD 27 Branch B tile. The Project requires the abandonment of a portion of the JD 27 drainage system, along with additional rerouting and impounding of system waters in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, sections 103E.806 and 103E.227.
7. The Drainage Authority met on July 15, 2025, and accepted the Petition. The Drainage Authority appointed the engineering firm of Bolton & Menk and Engineer Shaun Luker to investigate the effect of the proposed installation and to prepare a report, to be filed with the Drainage Authority, addressing the decision criteria found in Minnesota Statutes, sections 103E.227 and 103E.806.
8. Engineer Shaun Luker filed a report of findings with the Drainage Authority dated December 9, 2025, containing his investigation of findings regarding the effect of the proposed Project.
9. The Drainage Authority, set a public hearing for February 17, 2026, for review of the engineer's report of findings and directed the Auditors of Murray and Lyon Counties to provide at least 10 days' advance notice, by mail, of the time and location of the hearing

to the Petitioner, political subdivisions, and owners of property likely to be affected by the proposed modification, impoundment, and partial abandonment.

10. The Drainage Authority held a public hearing on February 17, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at the Murray County Government Center, 2500 28th Street, Slayton, Minnesota. At the hearing, the petitioner presented its petition and proposed actions.
11. The Drainage Authority's Engineer, Luker, presented his review of the proposed project in the Petition and a summary of the findings and conclusions in his engineer's report. Engineer Luker determined that the proposed modification and impounding of drainage system waters and partial abandonment of JD 27 as proposed in the Petition will be of public and private benefit; will not impair the utility of the drainage system; and will not deprive affected landowners of their benefits.
12. The proposed modification and impoundment will involve abandoning a portion of Branch A-1 of JD 27 in Section 3 of Lake Sarah Township between a discharge point to the wetland and Branch A.
13. The proposed modification and impoundment will involve abandoning a portion of Branch B of JD 27 tile in Section 3 of Lake Sarah Township approximately 70 feet in length.
14. The proposed modification will reroute the alignment of portions of Branches A and B of JD 27 within the petitioner's property.
15. The results of the hydraulic analysis show no negative impact to the adjacent landowners for the impoundments, reroutes, and abandonments.
16. The hydraulic analysis shows that all lands will still drain and have access to the system. There is no loss of outlet as described above.
17. During the public hearing, the Chair called for comments from the public and all comments submitted were taken and made part of the record of proceedings on file with the Drainage Authority. No comments were made at the public hearing that cast substantive doubt on the findings in Engineer Luker's report or raised any reason why the Drainage Authority should not proceed with approving the Petition.
18. Minnesota Statutes, section 103E.227, subdivision 4 requires the petitioner or drainage authority to obtain all required permits and all necessary rights-of-way and flowage easements from owners of land to be affected by an impoundment, reroute, and diversion petition before installing or constructing a project.

19. Petitioner and other owners of property have not yet granted rights-of-way to the Joint Drainage Authority for the right to access, inspect, and repair the portion of JD 27 rerouted for Petitioner's project. Rights-of-way easements will need to be granted to the Joint Drainage Authority both inside and outside the proposed Project area.
20. Based on the record of proceedings before it, the Drainage Authority finds that the proposed modification and impoundment as described herein will be of public and private benefit by providing new wildlife habitat, improving downstream water quality, and increasing temporary storage of floodwaters, thereby decreasing the burden on the downstream public drainage system.
21. Based on the record of proceedings before it, the Joint Drainage Authority finds that the proposed modification and impoundment, as described in these Findings and Order, will not impair the utility of the JD 27 public drainage system or deprive other landowners of its benefit.

Order:

Based on the foregoing Findings and the entire record of proceedings before the Board, the Board, acting as the Joint County Drainage Authority for Judicial Ditch 27, Branches A, A-1, and B, hereby orders as follows:

- A. That the Petition of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to modify and impound drainage system waters is granted subject to all conditions stated in this Order.
- B. The original drainage system records shall be modified to reflect the partial abandonment of the drainage system authorized herein and as described in the project concept plans and engineer's report of findings.
- C. The Drainage Authority shall have jurisdiction over and shall be responsible for inspecting, maintaining, and repairing all portions of JD 27, Branches A, A-1, and B remaining or modified as authorized herein.
- D. Petitioner and future owners of properties underlying the Petitioner's Project shall be solely responsible for the routine inspection, maintenance, and repair of the Petitioner's proposed Project.
- E. Petitioner shall protect the outlets for the project and is prohibited from modifying or allowing any outlet to be modified in any way that would adversely impact lands upstream in the drainage system.
- F. This Order is contingent upon the following additional conditions:

- a. Final plans and specifications must be approved by the Engineer and Drainage Authority staff before construction of Petitioner's project can begin.
- b. Prior to initiating construction of Petitioner's Project, Petitioner and all necessary owners of land must grant and record any required easements to the Drainage Authority for the right to access, inspect, and repair any portion of JD 27, Branches A, A-1, and B, modified from original alignment as part of the project authorized herein. The easements shall be subject to approval by the Drainage Authority's counsel before the easements are granted and recorded.
- c. Prior to initiating construction of Petitioner's Project, Petitioner shall pay all costs in these proceedings.
- d. Petitioner shall coordinate site meetings and construction scheduling with Drainage Authority staff, such that Drainage Authority staff may be able to complete an independent observation of the construction operations.
- e. Any private tile severed by project construction shall be reconnected by Petitioner.
- f. Upon completion of construction of the drainage system modifications authorized herein, Petitioner shall have record drawings showing the as-constructed condition of the drainage system and project prepared and submitted to the Drainage Authority staff.

After discussion, the Board Chair called the question. The question was on the adoption of the foregoing findings and order, and there were 5 yeas, 0 nays as follows:

	Yea	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Woelber (Murray)	☒	☐	☐	☐
Carlson (Murray)	☒	☐	☐	☐
Welgraven (Murray)	☒	☐	☐	☐
Zins (Murray)	☒	☐	☐	☐
Crowley (Lyon)	☒	☐	☐	☐

Upon vote, the Chair declared the motion passed and the Findings and Order adopted.


 Chairperson

Dated: February 17, 2026

* * * * *

I, Heidi Winter, Murray County Auditor-Treasurer, do hereby certify that I have compared the above motion and findings and order with the original thereof as the same appears of record and on file with the Joint Drainage Authority for Murray and Lyon Counties, public drainage authority for JD 27, Branches A, A-1, and B, and find the same to be a true and correct transcript thereof. The above order was filed with me, Murray County Auditor-Treasurer, on February 17, 2026.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand this 17th day of February, 2026.



Heidi Winter, Auditor-Treasurer

**JOINT DRAINAGE AUTHORITY BOARD OF MURRAY AND LYON COUNTIES MEETING
WAS ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 11:12 A.M.**

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS 02/01 TO 02/14/2026

Woelber

02/03 Commissioner
02/05 RCRCA

Meier

02/02 SWHHS Supporting Hands
02/03 Commissioner
02/05 ECI
02/12 Casey Jones
02/13 SW Mental Health

Carlson

02/03 Commissioner, Personnel
02/06 Building and Facilities
02/11 Plum Creek Library
02/12 Casey Jones, SWHHS Emergency Preparedness

Zins

02/03 Commissioner, Personnel
02/04 Radio, Nobles County Data Center

Welgraven

02/03 Commissioner
02/06 Building and Facilities
02/09 Missouri River
02/12 SWHHS Emergency Preparedness, SRDC

6. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Carlson corrected a previous meeting's comment in reference to the DNR Shotgun/Rifle discussion. When speaking with area commissioners, it was his understanding there had been a decision made by each. In fact, they had not formally acted on this topic to date. Commissioner Welgraven mirrored this comment with regard to his conversations with area commissioners. Lyon County is the only surrounding known county to have formally decided to take no action and allow rifle deer hunting in 2026.

MEETING ADJORNED AT APPROXIMATELY 11:40 A.M.

ATTEST:

Sharon Giese, HR Director/Deputy Administrator

Mark Carlson, Board Chair