

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE MURRAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MURRAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER - SLAYTON, MINNESOTA
December 16, 2025, 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, County Attorney Travis Smith, and General Assistant Renee Gleason.

8:30 A.M. CALL TO ORDER

2.1. AGENDA ADDITIONS

2.1.1. STATE LAND ACQUISITION - BILL SCHUNA, AREA WILDLIFE MANAGER

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 97A.145, Sub. 2, the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources on provided the county board with a description of lands to be acquired by the State of Minnesota for Wildlife Management purposes. Lands to be acquired are described as follows: The Southwest Quarter (SW 1/4) of Section 8, Township 105 North, Range 39 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian. AND The North Half of the Northeast Quarter (N 1/2 NE 1/4) of Section 18, Township 105 North, Range 39 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Carlson, and passed to approve the state land acquisition as outlined by the State of Minnesota for wildlife management purposes: Motion passed.

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 Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Meier, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed.

3.1. APPROVE MINUTES FROM 12/02/2025

3.2. COMMISSIONER WARRANTS

The Chairman was authorized to sign the Audit List dated December 16, 2025 with fund totals as follows and warrants numbered 178760 through 178817:

General Fund	\$ 85,506.53
Road & Bridge	54,115.81
Ditch	71.15
Sunrise Terrace	3,203.42
SAWS	169.00
Lime Creek	350.00
Total	\$143,415.91

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve all claims as presented for payment and approve the board meeting minutes of 12/02/2025. Motion passed.

8:45 A.M. PUBLIC HEARING: 2026 MURRAY COUNTY FEE SCHEDULE

Opened public hearing at 8:45 and 8:46 a.m. the hearing was closed because no one from the public stepped forward for comment.

4.2.1. DEPOSITORIES AND INVESTMENT DELEGATION

RESOLUTION 2025-12-16-01

A RESOLUTION DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO DESIGNATE DEPOSITORIES AND MAKE INVESTMENTS IN 2026

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Murray County Board of Commissioners delegates authority pursuant to M.S. §118A.02 to Heidi E. Winter, or successors, to designate depositories and make investments of funds under M.S. §118A.01 to 118A.06 or other applicable law during 2026.

It was moved by Commissioner Woelber, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve delegate authority to Heidi E. Winter, or successors, for electronic fund transfers in 2026. Motion passed.

4.2.2. EFT DELEGATION

RESOLUTION 2025-12-02

RESOLUTION TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY FOR ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS IN 2026

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statue §471.38 allows for the use of electronic fund transfer as means of making various payments; and

WHEREAS, Electronic funds transfer is the process of value exchange via mechanical means without the use of checks, drafts, or similar negotiable instruments; and

WHEREAS, a local government may make an electronic funds transfer for the following:

- For a claim for a payment from an imprest payroll bank account or investment of excess money;
- For a payment of tax or aid anticipation certificates;
- For a payment of contributions to pension or retirement fund;
- For vendor payments; and
- For payment of bond principal, bond interest and a fiscal agent service charge from the debt redemption fund.

WHEREAS, the County Board shall annually delegate the authority to make electronic funds transfers to the County's chief financial officer and their designee.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Murray County Board delegates the authority to make electronic funds transfers in 2026 to Heidi E. Winter, Murray County Auditor-Treasurer and her designees.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Auditor-Treasurer will:

- Provide a copy of this resolution to the disbursing bank;
- Provide a list of all transactions made by electronic fund transfer to the county board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Woelber, to approve delegate authority for electronic fund transfers in 2026. Motion passed.

4.2.3. 2026 POCKET GOPHER FEE

RESOLUTION 2025-12-16-03

A RESOLUTION SETTING THE 2026 POCKET GOPHER FEE

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Murray County Board of Commissioners set the 2026 Pocket Gopher Bounty at \$2.00. (2025 Amount \$2.00).

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Woelber, to approve the 2026 Pocket Gopher Bounty at \$2.00. Motion passed.

4.2.4. 2026 SOLID WASTE ASSESSMENT

RESOLUTION 2025-12-16-04

A RESOLUTION SETTING THE SOLID WASTE ASSESSMENT FOR 2026

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2019-12-17-07 reestablished the Solid Waste Assessment for a maximum of \$50 per improved parcel (parcel with a structure), and

WHEREAS, said Resolution states that the assessment amount may be adjusted to collect a percentage of the maximum amount based on circumstances existing in the levy year.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Solid Waste Assessment for 2026 be set at \$24 for all improved parcels (parcels with a structure), 48% of the \$50 maximum established in Resolution No. 2019-12-17.

It was moved by Commissioner Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Zins to approve setting the Solid Waste Assessment for 2026 at \$24.00 for all improved parcels (parcels with a structure), 48% of the \$50 maximum established in Resolution No. 2019-12-17. Motion passed.

4.2.5. 2026 911 SIGN ASSESSMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-12-16-05

A RESOLUTION SETTING THE E911 ASSESSMENT FOR 2026

WHEREAS, M.S. §429.021, subd. 1(18) authorizes counties to levy special assessments to purchase, install and maintain signs, posts and other markers for addressing related to the operation of enhanced 911 telephone service.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the E911 Rural Sign Assessment be set at \$3.00 and extended for assessments payable in 2026 for all non-exempt parcels in Murray County. (\$3.00 in 2025)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That unspent funds from these assessments be committed as fund balance.

It was moved by Commissioner Woelber, seconded by Commissioner Meier, to approve the E911 Rural Sign Assessment be set at \$3.00 and extended for assessments payable in 2026 and unspent funds from these assessments be committed as fund balance. Motion passed.

4.2.6. 2026 BEAVER CONTROL FEE

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-12-16-06
A RESOLUTION SETTING THE MURRAY COUNTY BEAVER
CONTROL FEE FOR 2026

WHEREAS, certain types of public property including county roads, ditches, and parks can be adversely affected by nuisance beaver, and

WHEREAS, Murray County occasionally needs to purchase services to have nuisance beaver removed and to provide the necessary financial incentives that service providers require, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Murray County Beaver Control Fee for 2026 is set at \$75.00 (\$75 in 2025) per nuisance beaver that are adversely affecting any county road, drainage system or park.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve the Murray County Beaver Control Fee for 2026 at \$75.00 per nuisance beaver that are adversely affecting any county road, drainage system or park. Motion passed.

4.2.7. COMBINE TAX PARCEL 29-460-0240 AND 29-460-0250

The lot with the Dinehart House and the empty lot south of it are owned by Murray County (tax parcels 29-460-0240 and 29-460-0250). In anticipation of constructing a motor pool garage, we would like to combine the two tax parcels. A request form is required with an owner's signature to accomplish this.

The site plan with the parcel overlay is included. Approval to combine tax parcels 29-460-0240 and 29-460-0250.

It was moved by Commissioner Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Meier to authorize the Board Chair and Auditor-Treasurer to sign a request to the Murray County Assessor to combine county-owned tax parcels 29-460-0240 and 29-460-0250. Motion passed.

4.2.8. DITCH BILLS

Report of ditch bills for payment of the Murray County Drainage Authority as follows:

Copies of invoices were available at the meeting.

Ankrum Excavating

21-819-6290	CD 22	359.30	2025-035	Ok'd by T. Radke 12/8/25
21-819-6290	JD 10	477.98	2025-039	Ok'd by T. Radke 12/8/25
	Subtotal	837.28		

Bolton & Menk

21-706-6260	CD 41	2,550.00	CD 41 Improvement - Engineering	
	Subtotal	2,550.00		

Engbarth Directional Drilling, Inc

21-657-6290	CD 7	1,150.00	#2025-025	ok'd T. Radke on 12/1/25
	Subtotal	1,150.00		

Johnson Ditching, Inc

21-759-6290	CD 66	921.43	2025-033	Ok'd by T. Radke 12/3/25
	Subtotal	921.43		

Opdahl Farm Drainage, LLC

21-707-6290	CD 42	1,880.00	2025-031	Ok'd by T. Radke 12/1/25
21-845-6290	JD 20	1,202.50	2025-034	Ok'd by T. Radke 12/1/25
	Subtotal	3,082.50		

Total Ditch Bills 8,541.21**Ankrum Excavating**

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Total Ditch Bills 8,541.21

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve the report of ditch bills as stated for payment of the Murray County Drainage Authority. Motion passed.

RECESS CALLED AT 8:40 - RESUME FOR PUBLIC HEARING AT 8:45 FOR THE 2026 MURRAY COUNTY FEE SCHEDULE.

4.3.1. MOTOR POOL GARAGE PROJECT

Murray County identified the need for a dedicated motor pool vehicle storage garage to support County fleet operations and enhance the lifespan, safety, and readiness of County vehicles. A 30' x 90' motor pool garage was included in preliminary capital project planning, and draft construction drawings have been completed.

Comprehensive bid specifications are prepared outlining the building structure, concrete foundation and slab work, mechanical and electrical systems, plumbing, and site work. The County has also obtained the required Conditional Use Permit from the City for this project. Bidding documents are complete and ready for public advertisement pending Board approval.

The proposed project includes:

- A wood-framed, asphalt-shingled, fully insulated garage structure
- Seven overhead garage doors
- Two service entry doors
- Six exterior windows
- Full electrical, lighting, mechanical, and plumbing systems
- Concrete foundation, interior slab, trench drain, and full exterior apron

Added: Originally omitted but as discussed - Constructing a wooden, woven fence along the southern property line, like south neighbors existing fence. Protect daycare kids and for privacy.

It was requested to provide an alternate bid for simply the building shell, gravel lot, and 7 doors.

Estimated cost of \$200,000.00 and that is in the 2026 Budget. After much discussion regarding alternative storage areas, selling of some current county-owned property first, and alternative project specifications, it was clarified this approval is only for sending specifications out for bid to understand overall costs. So there will still be an opportunity to decline proceeding with the project after the bids are reviewed.

It was moved by Commissioner Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Meier to approve the Motor Pool Garage Bid Specifications with discussed specification amendments and authorize public advertisement for bids, including setting a bid opening date of January 20, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. at the regularly scheduled Board meeting.

4.4.1. MINNESOTA HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

Seeking permission to apply for a grant on behalf of Murray County from the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants program. The requested amount is for \$19,980 to repair and stabilize approximately 126ft of track that runs between the turntable and engine house. This should allow the caboose moved inside for the winter for preservation. Photos were provided. This grant is to be submitted by January 8, 2026. If awarded, we would be required to go out for bid for the work.

Board asked about the results of the previous grants applied for. The federal turntable grant hasn't received a response to date. As of yesterday, we had not been awarded the grant for the windows. We were awarded a grant of \$14,000.00 for a storage plan for the museum.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to proceed with the grant application from the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants Program for \$19,980.00 which would fund the repair and stabilization of approximately 126 ft of track that runs between the turntable and engine house. Motion passed.

4.5.1. ESRI MAPPING SERVER PROJECT

- Assessors office needs better method to value soil types for ag properties.
- Several departments have 'copies' of map layers, not all current from the GIS Department.
- Mapping Server centralizes maps and layers...one stop shop for county mapping. Most other MN counties have this type of server and storage already and surprised we were still able to manage these files.
- Funding: Project Cost: \$34,000 (Includes 5% contingency) As discussed, the allocation of this cost could change due to other funding opportunities.
 - \$20,000 – from Recorder Tech Fund
 - \$10,000 – from Zoning Buffer Fund
 - \$4,000 – from IT Budget (after adjustments)
- Ongoing server licensing costs have already been included in the 2026 IT Budget.

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Woelber to approve moving forward with the ESRI Mapping Server Project as outlined for \$34,000. Motion passed.

4.5.2. COMMISSIONER ROOM A/V EQUIPMENT SURPLUS

Declare old A/V equipment from Commissioner Room surplus so we can list it on GovDeals:

- 2 Conference Room Cameras
- 2 A/V Panels
- 6 Microphones
- Various associated cables

It was moved by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to declare old AV equipment as listed as surplus goods to be auctioned off. Motion passed.

4.6.1. 2026 MURRAY COUNTY FEE SCHEDULE

A public hearing was held previous to this agenda item, with no public comments received on the 2026 Murray County Fee Schedule. Any items that have been updated or added were listed in red.

It was moved by Commissioner Zins, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve the 2026 Murray County Fee Schedule as presented, effective January 1, 2026.

4.6.2. ANNUAL PRESENTATION - HEATH LANDSMAN, COUNTY SHERIFF

Heath Landsman provided his annual department presentation reflecting accomplishments, 2025 statistics, and 2026 goals and potential expenses. He also provided supporting information and comparisons on the salaries of area County Sheriff's and Deputy Sheriff's.

Discussions with the board included texting "911" capabilities, limits of information sharing with other counties and State of MN, importance of visibility in the communities, and conducting pay studies for all county employees.

4.6.3. ANNUAL PRESENTATION - HEIDI WINTER, AUDITOR/TREASURER

Heidi Winter provided her annual department presentation reflecting primary responsibilities, partaking many of collaboration/leadership/partnerships opportunities, and continued professional development.

Upcoming goals were discussed, including 2026 election, 2025 audit, and 2027 budgeting process with department head direct input. The hope is to include annual presentations during the levy and budget review process, so that salary considerations are appropriately reflected. She reflected on her team being cross-trained and able to help in all areas with many moving parts.

Being a smaller office, her team needs to be trained in all areas of the department. Discussion proceeded to county salaries and comparison to other MN counties, appointed vs. elected, years of service/experience, and her desire for the county to succeed.

4.6.4. ANNUAL PRESENTATION - KAREN BROWN, COUNTY RECORDER

Karen Brown provided her annual department presentation reflecting on primary responsibilities, opportunities to participate in many collaboration/partnerships, various systems of recording, and services offered. Additionally, the more complexity of service is needed because of the potential for property fraud, additional wind energy projects, and issuance/updating of passports because of the REAL ID requirements.

Her department gets many citizens from other counties because of our customer service. Her department has had a 24% increase in recording/copy fees and 50% increase in online subscription fees this year. Her team consists of one other team member and has been here close to a year. So there has been a lot of training focus this year.

A current hot topic is property fraud and wants others to be aware. The recorders office continues to provide a free service notifying the property owner if a transaction has occurred on their property. In addition, a new MN statute may be enacted to publicly masked judicial names and associated addresses. The statute has the potential to be enacted for other government officials and staff as well. This too will add a layer of complexity of policy and procedure.

4.6.5 ANNUAL PRESENTATION - TRAVIS SMITH, COUNTY ATTORNEY

Travis Smith provided his annual department presentation reflecting on primary responsibilities, nearly 20 years experience as assistant county and county attorney. Because of changes in his private practice, a transition of an appointed new assistant county attorney took place.

Along with handling felony and misdemeanor cases within the county, juvenile delinquent cases, support to SWHHS, ongoing support for the Sheriff's office, planning and zoning meetings, board legal advise and meetings, and also supporting legal issues for the hospital, which is unique from other counties. All these duties while maintaining a smaller private practice as well. There has been a shortage of attorney's to fill open county attorney positions and vacancies occurring due to obtaining increases in salary for moving to the Public Defenders office. It has been a challenge to keep up with the administrative duties but continues to progress.

Also criminal cases related to mental health issues have increased and are very time-consuming because of the numerous agencies involved.

They have reduced charging backlog in juvenile cases, but juvenile cases generally come in faster than they are reviewed. In addition to the requirement of reviewing many avenues of electronic evidence in all cases. But again making substantial progress.

A Juvenile Circle Sentencing program as has been established, a restorative juvenile justice program to avoid a juvenile delinquency adjudication and get the services they need. Assistant County Attorney was instrumental in establishing this program. Continue to struggle with case management software but are making progress.

Travis was recently awarded the MN County Attorney's Associates Award of Excellence by his peers. This honors an individual showing a high level of dedication, professionalism, and commitment to public service and public practice of law. Leadership and innovation also is an attribute required for this award.

Goals outlined for 2026:

- Continuing to reduce the charging backlog. Would like to have cases charged out within 30 days.
- Case Management Software - being able to efficiently obtain and review electronic evidence. Would like to obtain an integration software to assist in this process. This is built into the 2026 budget.
- Consistent victim services Offerings - Would like to collaborate with neighboring counties to pool resources to hire this position. Grant applications for this position will be available 2027. Need to coordinate to get ready for this grant application.

Area salary comparisons were presented for the part-time county attorney position. Not sure how long the part-time county attorney model will suffice. Not a point of decision though currently.

Salary determinations for the positions presented today will be determined at the next Board Meeting. Travis Smith also reminded the Board next year is an election year. The board is required statutorily to set MINIMUM elected official salaries for 2026. He will provide further details at the next meeting.

4.6.6. 2026 STAFFING LEVELS

There are corrections to the staffing level document provided:

- Economic Development position is full-time, not part-time as outlined.
- Kele Moundry's position as IT Technician listed as part-time, it is full-time.
- Nick Demuth's position as Museum Director has moved from part-time to full-time.
- Tessa Risacher's position as License Center Clerk has moved from full-time to part-time.
- Assistant County Attorney is now Jenna Peterson.

Motion by Commissioner Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Meier to approve the amended 2026 Staffing Level as discussed.

4.6.7. EDA POSITION

There were 8 candidates who applied for the Economic Development position. Of these, 4 interviews were conducted. The Personnel Committee recommends Bryan Stading. He brings EDA experience with Martin County, where he has successfully initiated programs focused on community engagement and economic growth. He has a strong skill set in developing comprehensive marketing campaigns and strategic outreach efforts. His starting pay for this position is \$39.79 per hour.

Motion by Commissioner Meier, seconded by Commissioner Zins, to approve hiring Bryan Stading as the Murray County Economic Development and Marketing Coordinator pending drug and background check. Motion passed.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS 11/23 THRU 12/06/2025

Carlson

11/25 Commissioner, Truth-in-Taxation
12/02 Commissioner
12/04 Casey Jones

Zins

11/25 Commissioner, Truth-in-Taxation
12/02 Commissioner

Woelber

11/25 Commissioner, Truth-in-Taxation
12/02 Commissioner
12/04 RCRCA

Meier

11/24 Hospital, Finance, Personnel
11/25 Commissioner, Truth-in-Taxation
11/26 Hospital
12/02 Commissioner
12/03 ACE
12/04 Casey Jones
12/05 Personnel

Welgraven

11/24 Solid Waste, MN Rural Energy
11/25 Commissioner, Truth-in-Taxation
11/26 Hospital
12/02 Commissioner
12/05 Personnel

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Welgraven asked if there were any other items. No items mentioned. Meeting adjourned approximately 11:00 a.m.

ATTEST:



Sharon Giese, HR Director/Deputy Administrator



Dennis Welgraven, Board Chair