

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MURRAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MURRAY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER - SLAYTON, MINNESOTA
September 2, 2025, 8:30 AM

Pursuant to notice, the Murray County Board of Commissioners convened with the following members present in person: Commissioners; Loy Woelber, Mark Carlson, Dennis Welgraven and Roger Zins. Also Present in person were County Administrator Carolyn McDonald, General Assistant Renee Gleason, and County Attorney Travis Smith Via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER 8:30 A.M.

2.1 AGENDA ADDITIONS

The Board Chair asked if there were any additions to the agenda, none were identified.

2.2 IDENTIFY ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

3.1 CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Mark Carlson, seconded by Loy Woelber, to approve consent agenda. Motion Passed.

3.2 APPROVE MINUTES FROM 08/26/2025

It was moved by Loy Woelber, seconded by Mark Carlson, to approve Board of Commissioners meeting minutes from 08/26/2025. Motion approved.

3.3 COMMISSIONER WARRANTS

It was moved by Loy Woelber, seconded by Mark Carlson to approve Commissioner Warrants 177955 - 177998 for 09/02/2025. Motion Passed.

4.1.1 DITCH BILLS

C&K Construction

21-803-6290	JD 2N	5,097.50	#2024-050	ok'd by T. Radke-8/27/25
	Subtotal	5,097.50		

Rinke Noonan

21-861-6260	JD 27	1,007.50	(M-L) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-863-6260	JD 28	1,184.50	(M-L-R) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-809-6260	JD 5	1,096.00	(M-C) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-853-6260	JD 22	1,096.00	(M-C) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-855-6260	JD 23	1,096.00	(M-C) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-857-6260	JD 24	1,096.00	(M-C) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-689-6260	CD 30	1,469.50	(M-N) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-811-6260	JD 7	1,243.50	(M-N) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-845-6260	JD 20	1,243.50	(M-N) Redetermination of Benefits-Group 4
21-659-6260	CD 11	6,015.00	CD 11/State Hwy 30 - Legal
21-706-6260	CD 41	3,393.00	CD 41 Improvement - Legal
21-868-6260	Admin	200.00	07/2025 Monthly Retainer
	Subtotal	20,140.50	

Total Ditch Bills 25,238.00

It was moved by Loy Woelber, seconded by Roger Zins, to approve report of bills for payment for Murray County Draining Authority in the amount of \$25,238.00 for JD 2N, JD 27-28, JD 5, JD 22-24, CD 30, JD 7, JD 20, CD 11, and CD 41. Motion Passed.

4.2 LINCOLN PIPESTONE RURAL WATER SYSTEM JPA

LPRW is a government organization which was created in 1978 for the sole purpose of providing potable water to individuals in Southwest Minnesota. LPRW currently serves approximately 4,950 rural residences and 37 cities located in 10 Counties in Southwest Minnesota. LPRW owns approximately 3,400 miles of water pipeline, 18 water towers/storage tanks, 3 well fields, numerous wells, 3 water treatment plants, and a myriad of other infrastructures which is necessary to distribute potable water. LPRW sells approximately 3.84 million gallons of water each day which equates to approximately 1.4 billion gallons of water each year.

The purpose of LPRW's construction project is to construct a new water treatment plant, wells, water distribution lines, a water tower, water booster stations and several other improvements throughout LPRW's system. This construction project will also make improvements to LPRW's Burr Treatment Plant. The attached map shows the location of the new water treatment plant, wells, and main water lines.

This project will take approximately 3 years to complete. The estimated cost of the project is \$43,273,000.00. This amount will be paid for as follows:

\$26,179,000 - issuance of general obligation bonds
\$2,194,000 – grant from USDA/RD
\$8,264,000 – grant from State of Minnesota
\$2,376,000 – fee City of Cottonwood, MN will pay LPRW to connect to LPRW
\$260,000 – new customer connection fees
<u>\$4,000,000</u> – LPRW's contribution
\$43,273,000 Total

The general obligation bonds in the amount of \$26,179,000.00 will be issued in 3 phases. The first phase will be in the amount of 9.9 million dollars, the second phase will be in the amount of 9.8 million dollars, and the third phase will be in the amount of \$6,479,000.00 for a total of \$26,179,000.00.

The general obligation bonds are going to be issued in 3 phases, rather than all at once, because LPRW will pay less interest on the bonds by spreading the issuance of the bond amount of \$26,179,000.00 over a period of 3 years rather than issuing all the bonds at the beginning of the construction project. Furthermore, issuing the bonds in 3 phases is a requirement of the USDA who is giving LPRW a 2.194 million dollar grant to construct the project.

LPRW does not have the legal authority to issue bonds, therefore the bonds need to be issued by a County. On April 15, 2025 the Lac Qui Parle County Board of Commissioners passed a motion which authorized the issuance of 9.9 million dollars of general obligation bonds to help finance the construction of the first phase of this project. Even though Lac Qui Parle County will issue the bonds, LPRW will pay for

the bonds because LPRW is the beneficiary of the bonds.

Minnesota Statute 116A.24 Subd. 3 requires that all 10 Counties that receive water from LPRW be responsible to pay the bonds if LPRW defaults. This Statute states, in part, as follows:

"The payment of the cost of construction of a multicounty system and the subsequent improvement or extension of the system.....is the obligation of each of the counties containing property assessable for the system in proportion to the area of such property situated within the county.....".

The interpretation of this Statute is that if LPRW defaults on the payment of the bonds the amount each of the 10 counties needs to pay is the ratio of people served by LPRW in each county bears to the total amount of people served by LPRW. The following is a report prepared by LPRW's engineer (DGR Engineering) which shows the amount each county would pay if LPRW defaults on the bonds.

Jackson	2.00%
Lac Qui Parle	2.50%
Lincoln	21.70%
Lyon	19.80%
Murray	3.30%
Nobles	16.50%
Pipestone	15.50%
Redwood	0.30%
Rock	2.00%
Yellow Medicine	6.40%
Total	100%

Even though Minnesota law requires the 10 Counties to pay the bonds if LPRW defaults, LPRW's Bond Attorney (Mia Thibodeau) is requiring all 10 counties to approve the attached JPA before the bonds can be issued. For these reasons it is requested that County Board of Commissioners adopt a motion which approves the attached JPA and then signed.

It was moved by Mark Carlson, seconded by Roger Zins, to approve Lincoln Pipestone Water System Joint Power Agreement as written. Motion Passed.

4.3 APEX CLEAN ENERGY PRESENTATION

Representatives from Apex Clean Energy in attendance: Anna Hayes, Public Engagement Manager; Drew Christensen, Director of Public Engagement; Garrick Valverde, Sr. Development Manager

They provided a presentation on Box Car Wind project profile: Minnesota for Lyon and Murray Counties, project size of 1,000 MW, about 255 wind turbines to be installed, and planned operation by end of 2028. They currently have a verified wind source, with over 450 signed landowners with minimized environmental impacts. So this is 140,000 plus of total leased acreage, which 77,000 is Murray County leased acreage. Total number participants are 1,200 plus leaseholders. 450 plus are families. Fall of 2027 would be starting construction Phase I and Phase 2 starting

construction beginning 2029.

To date, Box Car Wind has donated over \$395,000 back to local community efforts.

4.4.1 LUKE SCHRYVERS

People

- Clinic Manager – We are excited to announce that Ashley Haskin has accepted the Clinic Manager position. Her first day at MCMC will be September 10th. Ashley has a master's degree in healthcare administration and experience in health information, revenue cycle, and quality.
- Interns – It was another successful summer with our summer interns. We are grateful to the County for continuing to sponsor this program and for us to be able to integrate these students into our facility. We wish them all the best of luck with their upcoming semesters and will stay in contact as they continue their journeys.
- Minnesota Hospital Foundation Leadership Academy – Amber Humphrey has been selected to participate in the emerging leaders in healthcare program. The Academy is designed to empower new healthcare leaders through immersive development, meaningful mentorship, and intentional networking. Amber will also receive a certification as a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ) through the program.

Growth

New Available Services - Dr Koenig in Orthopedics and Dr Kamlitz in General Surgery will hold their first clinic days in September. We are excited for them both to start here at MCMC and to be able to offer these additional providers to our patients and the local community.

Quality

Community Health Needs Assessment – We received the preliminary results of the CHNA. We had great participation as 132 participants completed the survey. A stakeholder meeting was held virtually on August 19th to receive feedback on the results and potential input on actions items moving forward. The final step is for the hospital to use the stakeholder feedback to develop action items to impact the key areas identified in the survey for the next 3-year cycle.

Financials

Rural Health Transformation Program – Through the Big Beautiful Bill, the federal government has allocated \$50 billion over 5 years to the rural health transformation program. Half the funds will be distributed equally among states who apply and are approved by CMS and half distributed at the discretion of CMS targeted at rural areas. States must apply by Dec 31, 2025.

Community

Foundation Donation – The foundation received a request from the MCC football team to purchase guardian caps for the players. These caps help further protect players and have been proven to reduce concussions and head injuries in athletes. I appreciate the foundation's support for our student athletes and making a positive impact in the community. Go Rebels!

Statistics

- Acute - 11 admissions for 26 total patient days. YTD numbers are still 14 less admissions and 80 days less compared to 2024 YTD.
- Swing bed had 6 admits for 38 total patient days. YTD, we have had 12 more admissions for 55 days more than the prior year.
- Observation stays were at 9 patients compared to 13 last year. YTD we are +14 patients
- Surgery procedures were at 34 for the month compared to 35 the previous year. YTD we are at 246 total procedures or 42 more than the prior year
- ER visits were 115, which was 43 less than last July. YTD, we have had 871 visits which is down 92 YTD.
- Clinic visits were at 613. That is 136 less than the previous year. YTD we are +161 visits.

Balance Sheet

- Our overall cash position decreased by \$11,574. We currently have a total cash available of \$10,514,035.
- We saw a decrease in patient receivables of \$491,492 and total receivables are at \$5,688,085.
- Net Patient Receivables (Amount we expect to collect) = \$2,861,291 or 50.3%
- AR Days increased by .3 days and currently sit at 66.2 days. Goal is to be under 50 days

Income Statement

Gross revenue was \$2,266,704 & below budget by \$544,395.

Hospital IP revenue below budget by \$156,4170.

Hospital OP revenue below budget by \$343,437.

Clinic revenue below budget by \$44,541.

Contractual adjustments lower than budget by \$352,385.

Expenses are lower than budget by \$39,634.

EBIDA (Earnings before interest, depreciation, and amortization) = \$-71,913, YTD = \$346,932.

For the month we had a net loss equal to \$-119,755. YTD net loss equals \$-61,354.

4.5.1 CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources recently updated their Expedited Conservation Projects (ECP) Activity List to include "Infected Tree Replacement" under the Forest Habitat category for the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant. The intent of the program is to replace trees infected with fatal pests or diseases with a diverse mix of multiple species. Eligible expenses include native trees or shrubs, contractor costs, equipment rental, herbicide, and tree mats/stakes. The funding ceiling for this grant program is \$75,000, requires a 10% match, and the deadline to apply is September 8, 2025. Many County properties are being considered for this grant application including county parks, fairgrounds, Government Center Campus, Health & Human Services, and Sunrise Terrace.

It was moved by Roger Zins, seconded by Mark Carlson and passed to approve an application being submitted to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for a Conservation Partners Legacy Grant for Forest Habitat - Tree Replacement, and authorize a 10% match, up to \$7,500, be funded from the respective parks,

fairgrounds, and/or general fund budgets. And to further authorize Administrator Carolyn McDonald to sign said application on behalf of the County.

4.6.1 TAX ABATEMENT POLICY AMENDMENT

The current Abatement Policy was approved December 18, 1990. Since then, Minnesota Department of Revenue (MN DOR) has suggested several items be included in an Abatement Policy to help clarify specific items associated with abatements.

It was moved by Roger Zins, seconded by Mark Carlson, to approve the Murray County Tax Policy Abatements of and Additions to Tax as drafted. Motion Passed.

4.6.2 2025 MERGED ALL ASSESSOR CONTRACT

Original assessment contract terms and conditions continue to remain in place with these new contracts. Every item, except dates, is the same as it was in the original contracts. The duration of the contract is also the same (3 years). The other 14 jurisdictions Murray County Assessor's Office has under contract currently will renew in 2027 (Townships of Bondin, Cameron, Ellsborough, Holly, Lake Sarah, Mason, Moulton, Murray, Skandia and the Cities of Avoca, Chandler, Currie, Hadley, Iona).

The Assessing Contracts renewed this year are for the following 9 jurisdictions:

We have 6 townships and cities that currently do their own assessing program. It is up to the jurisdictions to choose who would do their assessing, but the county could decide to go to a single assessing program. Murray County has been working very well with the (6) outside assessing entities. Due to the training requirements and retirements, there may be more township/counties moving to Murray County for assessing needs in the future.

<u>Townships</u>	<u>Cities</u>
Chanarambie	Lake Wilson
Dovray	
Fenton	
Iona	
Leeds	
Lime Lake	
Lowville	
Slayton	

It was moved by Mark Carlson, seconded by Loy Woelber, to approve the (9) 2025 Merged all assessor contracts as drafted. Motion Passed.

4.7 COUNTY ROAD SAFETY PLAN (CRSP)

All Minnesota Counties have had a County Road Safety Plan (CRSP) prepared by a consultant, with Murray County last one prepared in 2011. Murray County applied and was selected to participate in Phase 4 to prepare an updated version of the CRSP. The cost for the updated CRSP is \$113,628.71 with MnDOT covering 80% and the County paying 20%. Murray County's cost is \$22,725.74. The County Road Safety Plan allows us to access federal safety money (HSIP) on future County road

safety projects. There will be several area meetings conducted for this development coming out of the engineering budget which is approximately \$20,000.

Motion by Roger Zins and seconded by Loy Woelber to approve moving forward with updating the County Road Safety Plan at a local match cost of \$22,725.74.

Lake Shetek Dike project update: Construction is on 3rd dike right now and soon to start digging the box culvert. Then construction will move onto 1st dike. Hopefully the dikes will be completed at the end of fall. After dikes completion, the island work can start. Further discussions are likely regarding meeting timelines.

Overlay, shoulder, and striping projects are moving along as expected. The box culvert project for Iona Township will be completed before the year end.

4.8.1 HR TECHNICAL PROGRAM

Request Board approve HR Director Sharon Giese to participate in the HR Technical Assistant Program, administered by AMC and David Drown & Associates, AMC premier partner. This is a two-year program that will run through August 2027. Features include 24-hour helpline assistance, cohort support, legislative updates and compliance provisions, templates, checklists, and overall comprehensive statewide support on current HR issues. Expenditure Budget #80-6260

It was moved by Mark Carlson, seconded by Loy Woelber, to Approve HR Directors Sharon Giese's participation in the HR Technical Assistance Program through AMC at an annual cost of \$5,500.00. Motion Passed.

4.8.2 SET PUBLIC HEARING DATE TO ALLOW PUBLIC INPUT ON THE DNR STATEWIDE SHOTGUN ZONE REPEAL EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026.

Beginning January 1, 2026, the statewide shotgun-only zone will be eliminated, allowing rifles for deer hunting in that area—unless a county adopts an ordinance to restrict them. For the fall 2025 deer season, the current shotgun-only zone regulations remain in effect.

By March 1, 2026, the DNR is required to notify county boards and sheriffs in the affected areas about their new authority to regulate firearms. A public hearing notice will be sent to the Wheel-Herald immediately after this meeting. The public hearing would be set for Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 9:00 am in the Murray County Commissioner's Board Room for the purpose of taking input on the recent repeal of the statewide shotgun zone that will go into effect January 1, 2026.

It was moved by Roger Zins, seconded by Loy Woelber, to approve scheduling and announcing a public hearing to allow public input on state-wide zone elimination for deer hunting for Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Murray County Commissioner's Board Room to take input on the repeal of the statewide shotgun zone. Motion Passed.

4.8.3 BOARD OPERATING RULES UPDATE

Request Board to review and approve the Board Operating Rules and Guidelines addressing remote attendance for Board meetings.

F. Remote Attendance

Minn. Stat. § 13D.02 allows a local government board member to be considered present at the meeting for purposes of determining a quorum and participating in all proceedings from a remote location via interactive technology.

Minn. Stat. § 13D.02, Subd. 4, reads that if interactive technology is used to conduct a regular, special, or emergency meeting, County shall provide notice of the regular meeting the fact that members may participate in the meeting by interactive technology. The timing and method of providing notice of the regular meeting location must be as described in section [13D.04](#).

Each member participating in the meeting by interactive video shall be considered present at the meeting for purposes of determining a quorum. Interactive video or television must allow the Board member not in attendance to be always seen and heard by all Board members during the meeting.

"Interactive technology" means a device, software program or other application that allows individuals in different physical locations to see and hear one another. (Minn. Stat. § 13D.001, subd. 2)
The statutory conditions for meeting via interactive technology include all the following:

- All members of the body participating in the meeting, wherever their physical locations, can hear and see one another, as well as hear and see all discussion occurring at any location at which at least one member is present.
- Members of the public present at the regular meeting location can hear and see all discussions, testimony, and votes of the public body.
- At least one member of the public body is physically present at the regular meeting location.
- All votes are conducted by roll call so each member's vote on each issue can be identified and recorded.

The minutes for a meeting conducted under Minn. Stat. § 13D.02 must reflect the names of any members appearing by interactive technology.

It was moved by Mark Carlson, seconded by Roger Zins, to approve the Board Operating Rules and Guidelines addressing remote attendance for Board meetings as outlined. Motion Passed.

5.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Woelber

8/19/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/20/25 RCRCA Watershed
8/26/25 Commissioners Mtg

Carlson

8/19/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/20/25 Plum Creek Library Mtg
8/26/25 Commissioners Mtg

Welgraven

8/19/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/20/25 SWHHS Mtg
8/21/25 EDA
8/25/25 Personnel Meeting
8/26/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/27/25 Hospital Board & SWHHS Mtg, New Admin Intro

8/29/25 Budget Mtg

Zins

8/17/25 Fair Cleanup
8/18/25 SMOC Mtg
8/19/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/21/25 Planning Commission Mtg
8/22/25 Western Mental Health Mtg
8/26/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/29/25 Budget Mtg

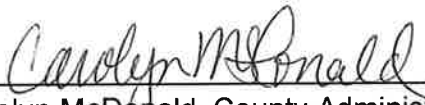
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8/17/25 Fair Cleanup
8/19/25 Commissioners Mtg/ Hosp.
8/21/25 EDA
8/25/25 Hosp. Finance/Personnel Meeting
8/26/25 Commissioners Mtg
8/27/25 Hospital Board

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

ATTEST:



Carolyn McDonald, County Administrator



Dennis Welgraven, Board Chair