

**Call to Order**

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met the 24<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. at the Aitkin Government Center with the following members present: Board Chair J. Mark Wedel, Commissioners Laurie Westerlund, and Bret Sample. Also present were County Administrator David Minke and Administrative Assistant April Kellerman.

Commissioners Travis Leiviska and Michael Kearney were absent.

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion made by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 3-0 to approve the February 24, 2026 agenda, as amended with adding item 2AA to the Consent Agenda.

There was no Citizens' Public Comment

**Consent Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 3-0 to approve the amended Consent Agenda as follows.

- A) Correspondence File – Acknowledge - Audit Letter from MN Department of Human Services;
- B) Approve February 10, 2025 County Board Minutes;
- C) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants paid 02.06.26: Health & Human Services \$22,751.40;
- D) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants paid 02.09.26: Health & Human Services \$560,273.76;
- E) Approve Commissioner Vouchers – Commissioner Warrants paid 02.13.26: General Fund \$195,299.82, Reserves Fund \$25,000.00, Road & Bridge \$76,123.22, Unorganized Townships \$27,166.78, State \$9,222.58, Trust \$5,802.61, Forest Development \$750.00, Long Lake Conservation Center \$12,101.14, Parks \$4,346.14, Coronavirus Relief Fund \$4,950.00 for a total of \$360,762.29;
- F) Adopt Resolution #20260224-019: LG220 Application for Exempt Permit – Moose-Willow Sportsman Club 07.2026;
- G) Adopt Resolution #20260224-020: LG220 Application for Exempt Permit – Moose-Willow Sportsman Club 11.2026;
- H) Approve Consumption & Display Permits – Hidden Meadows Campground Bar and Grill;
- I) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants – Sales/Use & Diesel Tax paid 02.12.26: General Fund \$65.02, Road & Bridge \$1,888.70, Trust \$25.89, Long Lake Conservation Center \$60.26, Parks \$97.37 for a total of \$2,137.24
- J) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants paid 02.13.26: General Fund \$278.16, Health & Human Services \$86,228.92 for a total of \$86,507.08;
- K) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Manual Warrants paid 01.30.26: General Fund \$8,107.54;
- L) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Elan paid 01.29.2026: General Fund \$1,716.20, Long Lake Conservation Center \$215.00, Road & Bridge \$45.63, Health & Human Services \$262.30 for a total of \$2,239.13;
- M) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Manual Warrants paid 02.13.26: General Fund

\$2,574.41, State \$54,068.76, Long Lake Conservation Center \$592.70, Parks \$20.00 for a total of \$57,255.87;

N) Information Only – Cash Balance Report – January 2026;

O) Approve Fire Protection Contracts for the Unorganized Towns of 52-25 (Quadna), 52-27 (Shovel Lake) and 51-27 (LeMay) with the Hill City Fire Department;

P) Adopt Resolution #20260224-021: Sentence to Serve Donation – Logan Township;

Q) Approve Purpose Driven (PD) Recovery Homes Opioid Funding Request for Fixed Compact Safe Boxes for Residents project in the amount of up to \$1,090 reimbursement of purchase funded with Opioid Settlement Funds;

R) Approve Purpose Driven (PD) Recovery Homes Opioid Funding Request for Initial Rent and Gap Funding project in the amount of up to \$5,000 invoiced monthly over the next 6 months for rent payment for those ineligible for housing support up to \$400 per month for a maximum of 6 months or \$2,400 per resident funded with Opioid Settlement Funds;

S) Approve Aitkin Sobriety Court Opioid Funding Request for Support and Engagement Initiative in the amount of \$3,500 one-time payment funded with Opioid Settlement Funds;

T) Approve Aitkin High School Opioid Funding Request for Sullivan's Message for AHS & Community in the amount of \$1,500 one-time payment funded with Opioid Settlement Funds;

U) Approve Committee of the Whole Minutes 02.17.26;

V) Ratify Outdoor School For All Funding Agreement for Long Lake Conservation Center - Be it resolved that the Grant Contract Agreement between the State of Minnesota and Long Lake Conservation Center for Outdoor School for All funding be ratified.

W) Adopt Resolution #20260224-022: Final Contract Payment on Contract 20258 to Anderson Brothers Construction in the amount of \$32,181 .55.

X) Approve Equipment Purchase of 2025 John Deere 544G from McCoy Construction and Forestry, Grand Rapids, MN for \$169,333.

Y) Approve 2026-2027 County and Tribal Nation Minnesota Family Investment Program Biennial Service Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Children Youth & Families.

Z) Approve New Health & Human Services Advisory Committee Appointments: Amanda Voller in District 2 – 2 year term (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027), Mary Koolmo – District 4 – 2 year term (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027), and Nicole Ulrich – District 3 – 1 year term (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026)

AA) Approve the re-appointments of John Welle, Aitkin County Engineer, and Mike Arnold to the Aitkin Airport Commission with each appointment to serve for a 3-year term (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026)

## **Regular Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 3-0 to Approve Letter Acknowledging Spongy Moth Treatment in Aitkin County.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 3-0 to Adopt Resolution #20260224-023 supporting the Aitkin County Land Department's Federal Recreational Trail Program Grant Application.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 3-0 to Adopt Resolution #20260224-024 awarding the Mille Lacs East ATV Trail construction bid to Big Wolf Siteworks, LLC for \$639,286.78;

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 3-0 to Approve the addition of SAP 001-030-010 to the 2026 Highway Maintenance/Construction Contract Schedule;

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Wedel: Be it resolved to Award Contract 20263 to Casper Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$953,000 and that the chairperson of the Aitkin County Board and the Aitkin County Administrator are authorized and directed to enter into a contract on behalf of Aitkin County upon presentation of proper contract documents. After continuing discussion, a request to call the question was made. Voting in favor to call the question were Commissioners Sample and Westerlund. Opposed Commissioner Wedel. Motion to call the question failed. After further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Wedel to amend the motion to award the contract by postponing it until the March 10<sup>th</sup> County Board meeting. The Amendment to Postpone passed 3-0.

Commissioner Committee Reports: Aitkin Itasca Koochiching Community Health Board, Aitkin County Opioid Settlement Sub-committee, Aitkin County CARE, Committee of the Whole.

**Adjourn**

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 3-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 a.m. with the next regular meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at the Aitkin County Government Center.

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J. Mark Wedel, Board Chair  
Aitkin County Board of Commissioners

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David J. Minke, County Administrator  
Clerk to the County Board