

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE COUNTY BOARD
March 4th, 2025

The Board of Commissioners of Freeborn County met in the Freeborn County Boardroom at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 4th, 2025. Members present: Commissioners Severson, Edwin, Kaasa, Shoff and Eckstrom.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Shoff offered the following motion;

MOVED, approving the agenda with the following additions under Report of County Administration; to accept the resignation/retirement of Elaine Wulff, Office Support Specialist – Public Health, effective March 31st, 2025; and to fill the Office Support Specialist – Public Health position.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the motion approved.

Commissioner Shoff offered the following resolution;

RESOLUTION No. 25-078
Approval of the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners Consent Agenda as provided
in the Freeborn County Board Rule of Procedure 9(A)

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the governing body of Freeborn County, and;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board has implemented a Consent agenda to perform the duties of the board in a more effective and efficient manner, and

WHEREAS, the following items have been placed for approval of the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners on the current Board meeting Consent Agenda as provided by the Board rules of procedure, being routine and of a regular action;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, to place the following are hereby approved for appropriate action:

- 1) Approval of the February 18th, 2025 minutes;
- 2) Approval of Regular Full-Time Status employees.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

After discussion a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution adopted.

The Commissioners provided Board Committee updates.

The Freeborn County Board of Commissioners presented the Rose Olmsted Advocacy Award to Sara Barnes. The Board Chair, Brad Edwin read off the nomination letters that were received on behalf of Sara's nomination for the award.

Chairman Edwin asked if there was any public comment and there was none.

A Public Hearing was held at approximately 8:40 a.m. regarding the adoption of the Freeborn County Cannabis Registration Ordinance Pursuant to Minnesota Statute Chapter 342.22. There was no one present that chose to make any public comments. The Public Hearing was closed at approximately 8:41 a.m.

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution;

Resolution 25-079

BEFORE THE FREEBORN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ACTING
AS DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR FREEBORN COUNTY DITCH 32

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners ordered the Petition for the Improvement and Repairs of Freeborn County Ditch 32 and the appointment of Steve Penkava of Jones, Haugh & Smith as engineer on September 5, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Steve Penkava, the duly appointed engineer, performed a preliminary investigation and report of County Ditch no. 32; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing shall be held to hear public comment on the Preliminary Engineer's Report for County Ditch 32 Repair and Improvement;

NOW THEREFORE, a public hearing is hereby set for April 1, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

After discussion a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution adopted.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution;

RESOLUTION 25-080

WHEREAS Freeborn County is the fiscal agent for the Third Judicial Veterans Court, and;

WHEREAS Freeborn County receives a state allocation, in addition to a federal grant to fund this program in its entirety, and;

WHEREAS the state of Minnesota Third Judicial District has asked us to return unused funds to the District this year.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners approve the amended amount of the Veterans Court contact with the Judicial District from the original amount \$212,512.51 to \$186,012.51.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Shoff.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-081

WHEREAS Freeborn County is the fiscal agent for the Third Judicial Veterans Court, and;

WHEREAS Freeborn County receives a state allocation, in addition to a federal grant to fund this program in its entirety, and;

WHEREAS the state of Minnesota Third Judicial District who provides the funding allows us to send three team members to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) conference each year,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners approve the out of state travel of Ben Babcock, Bethany Butler and Dr. Steve Lansing to travel to Kissimmee Florida for the NADCP conference the week of May 26th, 2025 through May 31st, 2025.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-082

***Resolution Supporting the Application for Grant Funding
for Freeborn County Trail Project- ENRTF/LCCMR Grant Funding***

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has requested \$2,500,000 in FY2027 in Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) Funding from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) for the project titled Freeborn County Shared User Trail Development; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has reviewed the funding request and the “Duties of a Fiscal Agent” document provided by the State and is fully aware of the work that will occur if funded, the project timeline, and the project budget; and

WHEREAS, this project benefits people walking, biking, and rolling by improving access to a school, park, and rural areas, with a long route that provides opportunity for exercise; and addresses safety hazards; and

WHEREAS, the grant requires a 25% match of local funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that if funding will be awarded, Freeborn County will act as fiscal agent for the Freeborn County Shared User Trail Development project and will not make use of a third-party fiscal agent; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Freeborn County authorizes the County Board Chair and the Administrator or County Engineer to enter into the fiscal agent agreement with the State of Minnesota for the above referenced project and comply with all applicable laws, environmental requirements and regulations as stated in the grant agreement.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Shoff.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Shoff offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-083

Resolution Supporting the Application for Grant Funding for Freeborn County Trail Project- MnDNR Regional Trail Program

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has set the goal of developing a paved trail on Freeborn County property from Albert Lea to the City of Hartland in several phases; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County is pursuing grant funding from a variety of sources to help fund this improvement in our community; and

WHEREAS, this project benefits people walking, biking, and rolling by improving access to a school, park, and rural areas, with a long route that provides opportunity for exercise; and addresses safety hazards; and

WHEREAS, HDR Inc. has prepared the content needed for the grant application in coordination with City of Albert Lea and Freeborn County staff; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County supports the grant application made to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Regional Trail Program to rehabilitate three former railroad bridges associated with the future construction of five and seven tenths (5.7) miles of paved trail between Albert Lea and Manchester; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has committed \$100,000 towards construction efforts on the project that will serve as the local match requirement for this project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Freeborn County agrees to accept the grant if awarded from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and will enter into agreement with the State of Minnesota for the above referenced project and comply with all applicable laws, environmental requirements and regulations as stated in the grant agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners names the fiscal agent for Freeborn County for this project as Philip Wacholz, County Engineer, 3300 Bridge Avenue, Albert Lea, MN 56007, Philip.wacholz@co.freeborn.mn.us, 507-377-5188; and

IT IS RESOLVED, that Freeborn County hereby assures the three rehabilitated bridges associated with the proposed trail will be maintained for a period of no less than 25 years.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-084

***Resolution Supporting the City of Albert Lea's Application for Grant Funding
for Freeborn County Trail Project- MnDNR Local Trail Program Grant***

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has set the goal of developing a paved trail on Freeborn County property from Albert Lea to the City of Hartland in several phases; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County is working in partnership with the City of Albert Lea on portions of the trail located in and adjacent to the corporate limits of the City of Albert Lea and each are pursuing grant funding from a variety of sources to help fund this improvement in our community; and

WHEREAS, this project benefits people walking, biking, and rolling by improving access to a school, park, and rural areas, with a long route that provides opportunity for exercise; and addresses safety hazards; and

WHEREAS, HDR Inc., the City of Albert Lea, and Freeborn County have determined that a portion of our project qualifies for funding from the MnDNR Local Trail Program Grant and that the City of Albert Lea is best suited to be the applicant; and

WHEREAS, if the City of Albert Lea is successful in their grant application, the funds will be applied to the construction of a pedestrian bridge structure to replace a retired timber railroad bridge near Shoff Park; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albert Lea has committed \$100,000 towards construction efforts on this portion of the project that will serve as the local match requirement for this project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Freeborn County supports the City of Albert Lea's application for grant funding from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Local Trail Grant Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Freeborn County hereby agrees to continued shared maintenance of the project after construction per the Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Albert Lea for UP Trail Maintenance dated May 4, 2022 and that maintenance is required to the improvements for a period of no less than 25 years.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Shoff.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-085

***Resolution Approving Public Highway At-Grade Crossing Agreement
with Union Pacific Railroad – CSAH 48 in Albert Lea***

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Highway Department has the responsibility of maintaining the County road system; and

WHEREAS, a Railroad crossing agreement is needed so improvements can be made to CSAH 48 (Margaretha Avenue) near US Highway 65 for the Union Pacific Railroad crossing; and

WHEREAS, the crossing agreement includes provisions for construction cost estimates for the new crossing and an annual maintenance fee for costs to maintain the crossing; and

WHEREAS, the project involves road and sidewalk improvements, a new railroad crossing, and new railroad signals and cross arms; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County received a Local Partnership Program Grant from MnDOT in the amount of \$245,000 to cover the costs of the new rail crossing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Board Chair to execute the agreement with Union Pacific Railroad for improvements to Crossing #876265X

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-086
Conditional Use Permit #47

Resolved, that Conditional Use Permit #47 is hereby amended to reflect the addition of a new 5,000-SF hoop structure for the purposes of black dirt storage, be and is hereby approved.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-087
Conditional Use Permit #398

Resolved, that Conditional Use Permit #398 is hereby amended to reflect the addition of a new 30,000 bushel storage bin and an air system from the existing dryer to the storage bins, be and is hereby approved.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-088
ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION OF ALEXA JACOBSON

WHEREAS, Freeborn County Public Health has the responsibility for providing a quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees;

WHEREAS; Alexa Jacobson has been employed as the Freeborn County Public Health Home & Community Registered Nurse since December 13th, 2023 and is resigning her position effective March 7th, 2025,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, to accept the resignation of Alexa Jacobson as a Freeborn County Public Health Home & Community Registered Nurse effective on or about March 7th, 2025.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Shoff.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-089

PERMISSION TO FILL THE FREEBORN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH HOME & COMMUNITY RN-PHN-SW POSITION

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County employees have the responsibility for providing quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees, and;

WHEREAS, Alexa Jacobson, Freeborn County Public Health Home & Community RN-PHN-SW, has resigned her position effective March 7th, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board approves the filling of the vacant Freeborn County Public Health Home & Community RN-PHN-SW position.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-090

PERMISSION TO FILL THE FREEBORN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER POSITION

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County employees have the responsibility for providing quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees, and;

WHEREAS, Say Rober, Freeborn County Public Health Community Health Worker, has accepted a new position as the Family Home Visitor;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board approves the filling of the vacant Freeborn County Public Health Community Health Worker position.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-091

ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION / RETIREMENT OF ELAINE WULFF

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Public Health has the responsibility for providing a quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees;

WHEREAS; Elaine Wulff has been employed as the Office Support Specialist – Public Health since September 15th, 2003 and is resigning her position effective March 31st, 2025,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, to accept the resignation/retirement of Elaine Wulff as an Office Support Specialist – Public Health effective on or about March 31st, 2025.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Shoff offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-092

PERMISSION TO FILL THE FREEBORN COUNTY OFFICE SUPPORT SPECIALIST – PUBLIC HEALTH POSITION

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County employees have the responsibility for providing quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees, and;

WHEREAS, Elaine Wulff, Freeborn County Office Support Specialist – Public Health has resigned her position effective March 31st, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board approves the filling of the vacant Freeborn County Office Support Specialist – Public Health position.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-093

ACCEPTING THE TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEE #725

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Sheriff's Office has the responsibility for providing a quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees;

WHEREAS; Employee #725 has been employed as a Freeborn County Patrol Deputy since March 18th, 2013 and has been terminated of their position effective February 28th, 2025,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, to accept the termination of employee #725 as a Freeborn County Patrol Deputy effective on or about February 28th, 2025.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following:

RESOLUTION 25-094

PERMISSION TO FILL THE FREEBORN COUNTY PATROL DEPUTY POSITION

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County employees have the responsibility for providing quality service with integrity and accountability to the citizens of Freeborn County;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board is the appointing authority for all county employees, and;

WHEREAS, Freeborn County Sheriff's Office has terminated employee #725 of their position effective February 28th, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board approves the filling of the vacant Freeborn County Patrol Deputy position.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED AS, approving the MN Deferred compensation 457 program as a second deferred comp option to our current employee benefits, available April 1st, 2025.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Shoff offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED AS, approving the Phased Retirement Policy

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

There was discussion on the Assessor and Appraiser position.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED AS, approving the pay grade increase for the County Assessor from a Grade 20 to a Grade 22

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED AS, approving the Cannabis Registration Application Ordinance

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION No. 25-099
Approval of Claims

RESOLVED, that the following claims be allowed and paid on or before March 7th, 2025.

<u>FUND</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
01	General Fund	\$ 656,119.48
03	County Road & Bridge	\$ 77,578.69
05	Human Services	\$ 197,178.60
06	Public Health	\$ 83,602.42
31	Capital Improvements	\$ 33,871.59
40	County Ditch	\$ 26,498.67
70	Trust & Agency	\$ 10,225.66
73	Payroll Clearing Fund	\$ 11,649.97
74	Turtle Creek Watershed	\$ 11,470.00
79	Social Services Collaborative	\$ 46.60
	FUND TOTALS	\$1,108,241.68

Number of Claims not exceeding \$300 – 200
Dollar amount of claims not exceeding \$300 – \$17,434.45
Resolution seconded by Commissioner Shoff.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the Chair declared the resolution adopted.

Chair, Commissioner Edwin adjourned the meeting at 9:47 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 18th, 2025.

By: _____
Brad Edwin
Chair

Attest: _____
Chelsea Barrett
County Clerk