

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE COUNTY BOARD
April 15th, 2025

The Board of Commissioners of Freeborn County met in the Freeborn County Boardroom at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 15th, 2025. Members present: Commissioners Severson, Edwin, Kaasa, and Shoff. Commissioner Eckstrom was absent .

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Severson offered the following motion;

MOVED, approving the agenda with the following addition; to fill the vacant License Center Specialist position. An amendment was made by Commissioner Kaasa to move the workshop session down below item 9B; Commissioner Severson also added an amendment to the agenda to add below 9B a resolution opposing the proposed Battery Energy Storage System near Glenville, MN as currently proposed Docket Numbers ESS-24-294 and TL-24-295

Motion seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.

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

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution;

RESOLUTION No. 25–131
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 April 1st, 2025 minutes;
- 2) Approval of the April 8th, 2025 minutes;
- 3) Approval of Regular Full-Time Status Employees;
- 4) Approval of Drainage Repairs

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Shoff.

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

The Commissioners provided Board Committee updates.

Chairman Edwin asked if there was any public comment and the following individuals addressed the Board; John Forman, Emma Thompson, Tiffany Paino, Holly Rahn, Teresa Nicholson, Jaclyn Sifert, Jeff Jackson, Cole Pestorious, Tim Kaasa and Karissa Studier.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution;

FREEBORN COUNTY MINNESOTA RESOLUTION #25-132

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2024 COUNTY FEEDLOT OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT
PURSUANT TO MINNESOTA ADMINSTRATIVE RULES, CHAPTER 7020.1600 SUBP. 2J.**

WHEREAS, FREEBORN COUNTY is currently party to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's County Animal Feedlot Delegation Agreement in accordance with Minnesota Administrative Rules Ch. 7020, as approved, adopted, and signed by the Board of Commissioners on 02/05/02.

WHEREAS, Minn. Rules Ch. 7020.1600 Subp. 2J. requires that the County Feedlot Officer Annual Report be reviewed and signed by the County annually.

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Feedlot Officer has submitted the 2024 County Feedlot Officer Annual Report along with the Successful Year End Review letter from the MN Pollution Control Agency to the Board of Commissioners that summarizes and shows the successful completion of the Feedlot Delegation Agreement Work Plan for 2024.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners approves the 2024 County Feedlot Officer Annual Report.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Severson.

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

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution;

RESOLUTION 25-133

Resolution Approving Removal of a Flashing Beacon in the City of Geneva on CSAH 35 and CSAH 45

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

WHEREAS, a 4-way flashing beacon has been in operation for at least four decades in the City of Geneva at the intersection of Freeborn County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 35 and Freeborn County State Aid Highway 45; and

WHEREAS, the City of Geneva is completing a project to reconstruct all downtown sidewalk at this intersection that is anticipated to commence during the 2025 construction season; and

WHEREAS, crash reports from 2010 to 2024 indicate no crashes due to failure to stop under the current arrangement of the intersection; and

WHEREAS, the County Engineer is recommending removal of the 4-way flashing beacon as a part of the Geneva sidewalk project given the following information:

- The City of Geneva sidewalk project will include improved stop sign locations that are more visible for traffic; and
- The City of Geneva sidewalk project includes a parking arrangement that meets Minnesota state statute 169.34 that restricts parking within 30 feet of a stop sign; and
- The City of Geneva sidewalk project includes intersection lighting that will further enhance the visibility of the stop signs at the intersection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners authorizes the removal of the 4-way flashing beacon located at the intersection of CSAH 35 and CSAH 45; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the work will be completed by a third party and the exact timing of the removal of the flashing beacon will be coordinated with the County Engineer.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.

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

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-134

PERMISSION TO FILL THE FREEBORN COUNTY LICENSE CENTER SPECIALIST 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, Megan Reule, Freeborn County License Center Specialist -Lead has been promoted to the License Center Office Services Supervisor position effective April 14th, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board approves the filling of the vacant Freeborn County License Center Specialist position.

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

Commissioner Shoff offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED AS, Resolution 25-135, approving the labor negotiation agreement for the Detention Deputies

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, Resolution 25-136, accepting the resignation of Candice Lahann, Interim County Assessor,
effective May 6th, 2025

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

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 25-137

Resolution Establishing Name for County Trail

WHEREAS, Freeborn County acquired 12 miles of retired Union Pacific Railroad in 2014 with the goal of developing a scenic trail from Albert Lea to Hartland and beyond; and

WHEREAS, efforts to secure funding for the trail and initial work to promote the project would both benefit from the naming of the trail project so a consistent reference can be made to the project; and

WHEREAS, [consider insertion of some naming strategy as described by Commissioner Eckstrom in this and additional WHEREAS statements if you feel appropriate]; and

WHEREAS, public input was solicited and received by the County Board from the City of Albert Lea Parks and Recreation Advisory Board as well as the Freeborn County Trail Association; and

WHEREAS, Freeborn County owns the property that the trail will be located on and therefore has authority to establish the name of the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners hereby establishes the name of the Trail project between Albert Lea and Hartland on County owned retired rail property as the Songbird Trail.

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

The following resolution was on the table but received no first or second;

**RESOLUTION No. 25-138 Resolution opposing Midwater Battery Energy Storage System, LLC near
Glenville, MN Docket Nos. Ess-24-294 and TL-24-295**

The resolution did not receive a second.
After discussion, the Chair declared the resolution failed.

Commissioner Kaasa offered the following resolution:

**Freeborn County Board of Commissioners Resolution 25-139
RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (“BESS”) NEAR
GLENVILLE, MN AS CURRENTLY PROPOSED
DOCKET NOS. ESS 24-294 and TL 24-295**

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners (“Commissioners”) is vested with the authority and responsibility to act for the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents and visitors of Freeborn County; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners acknowledge Minnesota’s goals related to energy production and the importance of grid reliability; and

WHEREAS, a specific proposal has been made for the construction and operation of a battery energy storage system (“BESS”) project at a location in close proximity to the community of Glenville, its residents, the Shell Rock River, and designated wildlife management areas; and

WHEREAS, based on review of the information available regarding this specific BESS project proposal, the Commissioners have identified concerns regarding potential adverse impacts on the local community, residents, wildlife, and environment adjacent to the proposed Glenville site; and

WHEREAS, potential health and safety risks associated with BESS technology, including the potential for emission of toxins, thermal events, fire, explosions, and “thermal runaway,” raise significant concerns regarding this proposed project, particularly given its proposed scale and specific location near residences and sensitive environmental resources. Based on available information, such events, if initiated at this location, could pose substantial risks and challenges for emergency response, potentially impacting human safety, wildlife, property, and the environment adjacent to Glenville and the Shell Rock River; and

WHEREAS, the anticipated continuous noise emissions from the operation of this proposed BESS project, considering its proximity to existing residences and natural areas, raise concerns regarding potential nuisance and impacts on the welfare of nearby residents and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the proximity of the proposed project site to the Shell Rock River, a DNR designated State Water Trail, necessitates careful consideration of potential impacts on water quality and recreational use, raising concerns based on the current proposal; and

WHEREAS, the proposed site location is within an area documented as subject to severe weather events, including tornadoes, high winds, and torrential rains, posing potential physical risks to this specific BESS facility as proposed and potentially increasing the risk of hazardous material runoff from this site into the Shell Rock River Watershed; and

WHEREAS, considering the specific characteristics, scale, and operational plan outlined in this proposed BESS project, combined with its sensitive location near the Glenville community, residences, the Shell Rock River, and wildlife areas, the Commissioners find, based on the record before them, that the identified potential risks to public health, safety, welfare, property, and the environment must be taken into consideration by the MPUC;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners, as follows:

1. The above recitations, specific to the proposed Glenville BESS project and its proposed location, are hereby

adopted as the findings and concerns of the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners based upon the information and record reviewed.

2. That the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners finds that the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (“BESS”) project near Glenville, MN, as currently proposed and reviewed, is inconsistent with the County’s goals and responsibilities regarding the protection of public health, safety, and welfare, and the promotion of responsible and compatible land use in this specific area.
3. That, based upon the concerns specific to this proposal, the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners hereby opposes the approval and development of the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (“BESS”) near Glenville, MN, as currently proposed.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson

After discussion, a vote was taken with Commissioners Severson, Kaasa and Edwin voting yay, Commissioner Shoff abstained from the vote and the Chair declared the resolution approved.

Commissioner Shoff offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION No. 25-140
Approval of Claims

RESOLVED, that the following claims be allowed and paid on or before Friday, April 18th, 2025.

<u>FUND</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
01	General Fund	\$ 490,071.24
03	County Road & Bridge	\$ 132,049.83
05	Human Services	\$ 193,676.62
06	Public Health	\$ 69,512.94
31	Capital Improvements	\$ 4,634.75
40	<u>County Ditch</u>	<u>\$ 12,247.86</u>
	FUND TOTALS	\$ 902,193.24

Number of Claims not exceeding \$300 – 28

Dollar amount of claims not exceeding \$300 – \$3,527.61

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Severson.

After discussion, a vote was taken with Commissioners Severson, Kaasa and Shoff voting yay, Commissioner Edwin voting yay and abstaining from the claim to the Credit Bureau of Albert Lea, the Chair declared the resolution adopted.

Chair, Commissioner Edwin adjourned the meeting at 9:31 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 6th, 2025.

By: _____
Brad Edwin
Chair

Attest: _____
Chelsea Barrett
County Clerk