

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE COUNTY BOARD
Tuesday July 7th, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of Freeborn County met in the Freeborn County Boardroom at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Tuesday, July 7th, 2026. Members present: Commissioners Severson, Edwin, Kaasa, Shoff and Eckstrom.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Severson offered the following motion;

MOVED, approving the agenda as presented.

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. 26–192
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 Minutes from the County Board of Appeal & Equalization on June 15th, 2026
- 2) Approval of the June 16th, 2026 minutes;
- 3) Approval of Regular Full-Time Status Employees.
- 4) Approval of Drainage Repairs
- 5) Approval of Claims

The following claims be allowed and paid on or before July 10th, 2026.

<u>FUND</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
01	General Fund	\$ 1,020,457.07
03	County Road & Bridge	\$ 855,260.01
05	Human Services	\$ 219,168.78
06	Public Health	\$ 80,522.20
40	County Ditch	\$ 238,555.43
70	Trust & Agency	\$ 9,532.62
73	Payroll Clearing Fund	\$ 3,589.12
74	Turtle Creek Watershed	\$ 2,800.00
79	Social Services Collaborative	\$ 38.40
80	Tax Collection Fund	\$ 50.00
	FUND TOTALS	\$ 2,429,973.63

Number of Claims not exceeding \$300 – 158

Dollar amount of claims not exceeding \$300 – \$15,412.99

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

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 there was none.

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution;

RESOLUTION NO. 26-193

TITLE: Resolution Denying Funding the Peer Support for Freeborn program through Meetopolis with Opioid Settlement Funds

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has received Opioid Settlement Funds intended to support approved abatement activities addressing the public health impacts of the opioid epidemic through prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction strategies;

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee developed and issued a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify local projects that align with state settlement guidelines and County priorities;

WHEREAS, Meetopolis applied for the Freeborn County Recovery Connection Initiative, a proposed 12-month project that would establish a county-branded digital recovery platform providing 24/7 access to peer support communities, virtual support groups, treatment navigation resources, recovery events, educational programming, family support resources, harm reduction education, and referral management tools intended to complement existing local recovery services;

WHEREAS, the proposal requested \$50,000 in Opioid Settlement Funds to support platform licensing and hosting, platform configuration and county branding, participant enrollment and community outreach, peer support and recovery engagement activities, data collection and reporting, and project management and administrative support;

WHEREAS, the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee reviewed and scored the application according to the County's established evaluation criteria and determined that, while the proposal represents an allowable opioid abatement activity, it did not sufficiently demonstrate a direct and measurable benefit to Freeborn County residents relative to the funding requested;

WHEREAS, the Committee found that the proposal relies primarily on a proprietary digital platform without demonstrating a clearly identified unmet need within Freeborn County, provides limited evidence that the proposed services would result in measurable improvements beyond existing local recovery resources, lacks sufficient detail regarding local implementation and community partnerships, and relies on future funding sources to sustain the project after the initial grant period;

WHEREAS, based on its review, the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee recommends denial of the funding request at this time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners, that the request for \$50,000 in Opioid Settlement Funds for the Meetopolis Freeborn County Recovery Connection Initiative is hereby denied.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Kaasa.

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

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution;

RESOLUTION NO. 26-194

TITLE: RESOLUTION APPROVING GAMBLING LICENSE APPLICATION FOR TWIN LAKES FIREMENS RELIEF ASSOCIATION

WHEREAS, The Twin Lakes Firemens Relief Association has submitted an application for temporary gambling at Hickory Hills Campground;

WHEREAS, The application was approved by the Nunda Township Board on June 22, 2026;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners, that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners approves the gambling license.

Resolution seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

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

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution:

RESOLVED AS, RESOLUTION No. 26-195, approving the Cooperative Agreement between Freeborn County and the Third Judicial District Court for Veterans Treatment Court

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:

RESOLUTION NO. 26-196

TITLE: Award of Construction Contract for SAP 024-590-002 – Songbird Trail

WHEREAS, Freeborn County, the City of Albert Lea, and Waseca County have formed a joint committee for the purposes of developing Songbird Trail from Albert Lea, MN to Waterville, MN; and,

WHEREAS, Songbird Trail was regionally designated by the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission in June of 2026; and,

WHEREAS, construction documents were prepared by HDR, Inc. for grading, bituminous surfacing, ADA improvements and bridges R1144, R1145, R1146, and R1147 on Songbird Trail in Albert Lea, MN for trail segments and bridges located within property formerly owned by Union Pacific Railroad and acquired by Freeborn County; and,

WHEREAS, bids were solicited for this project and publicly opened in accordance with Minnesota Statute 471.345; and,

WHEREAS, two responsive bids were received with the low bid being in the amount of \$2,196,928.72 submitted by Ulland Brothers Inc.

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

1. The Board hereby accepts the lowest responsible bid from Ulland Brothers Inc. for \$2,196,928.72 and authorizes the Board Chair and Administrator to enter into a construction contract to complete this work for Project SAP 024-590-002.

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 NO. 26-197

TITLE: Approval of Active Transportation Grant Agreement for SAP 024-590-002 to support construction of segments of Songbird Trail.

WHEREAS, Freeborn County, the City of Albert Lea, and Waseca County have formed a joint committee for the purposes of developing Songbird Trail from Albert Lea, MN to Waterville, MN; and,

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has applied to the Commissioner of Transportation for a grant from the Active Transportation Account and has been notified that funding for project SAP 024-590-002 has been allocated; and,

WHEREAS, after considering the amount of the low bid and the cost share requirements of the grant program, the amount of the grant shall be \$846,274.92.

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

1. Freeborn County does hereby agree to the terms and conditions of the grant consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 174.38, and will pay any additional amount by which the cost exceeds the estimate and will return to the Minnesota State Transportation Account any amount appropriated for the project but is not required.
2. The Board Chair is authorized to execute the grant agreement and any amendments thereto with the Commissioner of Transportation concerning the above referenced grant with attestation from the County Clerk.

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 NO. 26-198

TITLE: Approval of Regional Trail Grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for SAP 024-590-002 to support reconditioning of bridges on Songbird Trail.

WHEREAS, Freeborn County, the City of Albert Lea, and Waseca County have formed a joint committee for the purposes of developing Songbird Trail from Albert Lea, MN to Waterville, MN; and,

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has applied to the MnDNR for a grant from the Regional Trail Grant program and has been notified that funding for project SAP 024-590-002 has been allocated in the amount of \$300,000; and,

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

1. Freeborn County does hereby agree to the terms and conditions included in State of Minnesota Grant Contract Agreement for Project R001-25-4D and will pay any additional amount by which the cost exceeds the estimate and will return to the Minnesota State any amount appropriated for the project but is not required.
2. The Board Chair is authorized to execute the grant agreement and any amendments thereto concerning the above referenced grant with attestation from the County Clerk where required.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

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

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 26-199

TITLE: Consider a resolution approving the use of funds committed for trail construction for Songbird Trail.

WHEREAS, Freeborn County, the City of Albert Lea, and Waseca County have formed a joint committee for the purposes of developing Songbird Trail from Albert Lea, MN to Waterville, MN; and,

WHEREAS, Freeborn County solicited bids for SAP 024-590-002 that includes work on the Songbird Trail and the low bid received was in the amount of 2,196,928.72; and,

WHEREAS, three grants totaling \$1,396,274.92 will be used to fund the project leaving \$800,653.80 to be funded in equal splits by Freeborn County and the City of Albert Lea; and,

WHEREAS, Freeborn County has committed funds reserved for the development of the Songbird Trail and wishes to use them to satisfy the County's commitment for this project.

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

1. That the County Engineer is approved to use Freeborn County funds committed for trail construction to pay the County's share of the construction contract and other related project expenses up to an amount of \$400,000.
2. The County declares its official intent to reimburse itself for the cost of the improvements from the proceeds of tax exempt bonds.

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:

RESOLVED AS, RESOLUTION No. 26-200, approving the Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Hartland for parking and access at new community center and fire hall.

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. 26-201

A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT DONATED GAS CARDS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO VETERANS AND FAMILIES IN NEED THROUGH THE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

WHEREAS, the County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) serves as the primary point of contact for Veterans and their families to access state and federal benefits and support services; and

WHEREAS, Local Veteran Service Organizations has generously offered to donate gas cards to assist Veterans and their families experiencing financial hardship; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes § 465.04 authorizes counties to accept gifts and donations for public purposes when approved by the County Board; and

WHEREAS, the donated gas cards are valued at **\$50 each**, with the total number of cards to be determined, and are intended solely to support Veterans and their families, not as compensation for any County employee, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes § 197.604; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest of Freeborn County to accept such donations to support the welfare of Veterans and their families;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners hereby:

1. **Accepts the donation of gas cards valued at \$50 each** from Local Veteran Service Organizations on behalf of Freeborn County, with the total number of cards to be determined;
2. **Authorizes the County Veterans Service Office** to receive, hold, and distribute the donated gas cards to eligible Veterans and their families in need, in accordance with established eligibility criteria; and
3. **Directs the County Administrator** and CVSO to ensure proper documentation and accounting of the donation in accordance with county policies and applicable Minnesota law.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.

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

Commissioner Severson offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 26-202

**RESOLUTION APPROVING A 5 YEAR LEASE WITH THE MN DVS
FOR OFFICE SPACE FOR AN EXAM STATION**

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State legislature has allocated to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety an allotment funds to procure lease space for Driver and Vehicle Services Exam Stations, and,

WHEREAS, Freeborn County operates as a Deputy Registrar on behalf of the State of Minnesota and,

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota has historically provided exam services in the Freeborn County Government Center in conjunction with the Deputy Registrar's office; and,

WHEREAS, the Freeborn County Board of Commissioner views DVS examination services to be critical to the citizens of Freeborn County and wishes this service to remain in the Freeborn County Government Center

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the 5-year lease with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Driver and Vehicle Services for the following area:

Approximately two hundred (200) square feet of office space in a room or area in the Freeborn County Government Center at 411 South Broadway Avenue, Albert Lea, MN 56007

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Eckstrom.

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

Commissioner Eckstrom offered the following motion:

MOVED, that the Freeborn County Board will designate Commissioner Kaasa and Commissioner Edwin to represent Freeborn County at the initial regional roundtable discussion regarding the PowerOn Midwest project with the understanding that participation is for informational and collaborative purposes only and does not commit the County to any further future action or position.

Resolution was seconded by Commissioner Severson.

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

Chair, Commissioner Edwin adjourned the meeting at 9:32 a.m. until 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 21st, 2026.

By: _____
Brad Edwin
Chair

Attest: _____
Chelsea Barrett
County Clerk