

PROCEEDINGS OF THE RED LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

June 24, 2025

Pursuant to adjournment of its last meeting, the Red Lake County Board of Commissioners duly met in regular session at the Courthouse in Red Lake Falls, MN on June 24th, 2025, at 10:00 am.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Flage called the meeting to order. Commissioners present were Al Remick, Eric Mickelson, Tony Gerardy, Andy Moran and Chuck Flage. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Moran moved, seconded by Commissioner Remick and carried unanimously to approve the agenda with the following additions:

- Highway Engineer, Taylor Amiot Re: Truck Box
- Human Resources Director, Angie Lundeen Re: Job Description Reviews

BID OPENING SP 6301-56 (TH-32) - Grading, Bituminous, Lighting

Bids were collected until 10:00 am for the grading, bituminous work and lighting for Trunk Highway 32 project SP 6301-56. Highway Engineer Taylor Amiot opened and announced the bids as follows:

Davidson Construction Inc.	\$649,263.50
Knife River Materials	\$695,809.35
R.J. Zavoral and Sons, Inc.	\$628,780.70

Commissioner Gerardy moved, seconded by Commissioner Mickelson and carried unanimously to approve the low bid contingent upon no errors in the apparent low bid and execution of the MnDOT agreement.

SOIL EROSION

The board received an update regarding a conversation with a local farmer about erosion concerns on a parcel he farms in Red Lake County. The farmer confirmed that he had coordinated with Soil and Water and planned to complete the necessary work in the fall after the bean harvest, using one of two contractors familiar with the project. He requested to minimize crop disturbance since his operation is covering the cost. Board members expressed concern about potential sediment washing into the adjacent water quality pond in the event of heavy rain, especially since no cover crops were planted and pre-emergent was applied. The board discussed the limited authority it has in enforcing cleanup but agreed it would be prudent to send a letter documenting the tenant's intentions and noting the board's concern about runoff, which could serve as evidence of awareness should issues arise.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kurt Casavan Environmentalist provided an update regarding the landfill timeline and ongoing conversations with Stantec. He expressed concerns about continuing to pay for engineering work related solely to keeping the landfill open when the board is still considering closure or switching to a transfer station model. He reiterated to Stantec that any work done must be applicable to both closure and continued operations. Stantec confirmed that the current scope of work would be necessary regardless of direction. Kurt also discussed the lack of timely communication from the MPCA and efforts to explore partnerships with other facilities, including potential demo transfer options. The group discussed the possibility of securing funding through the SWIFR grant program, which remains in progress through the 9-county Hub and Spoke Group, with Hubbard County serving as the fiscal agent. These funding options

PROCEEDINGS OF THE RED LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

could play a significant role in shaping the final decision. Kurt also reviewed potential costs, equipment needs (like roll-offs and a compactor), and options for hauling material if a transfer site is pursued. The board emphasized the importance of keeping options open until more funding and regulatory clarity is available, while also preparing for a possible shift to transfer operations.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM UPDATES

Bob Guthrie, a hydrologist with the Minnesota DNR, provided an overview of the groundwater permitting process with a focus on Red Lake and Polk Counties. With a background in agriculture and geology, Guthrie explained that the region primarily uses confined aquifers and that Red Lake County is considered high-risk due to numerous well interference issues. He detailed the water allocation priorities under Minnesota's riparian water law and described the steps for obtaining a high-capacity water use permit, including required pump tests, maps, and documentation. Guthrie emphasized the need for written agreements between applicants and nearby domestic well owners in high-risk areas to protect water availability and prevent conflicts. He also covered aquifer characteristics, monitoring efforts, and the DNR's modeling and survey processes to evaluate water use impacts and issue permits responsibly.

MINUTES

Commissioner Remick moved, seconded by Commissioner Moran, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the meeting on June 10th, 2025.

HUMAN RESOURCES ANNOUNCEMENTS

HR Director Angie Lundeen provided an update on the ongoing compensation study. Revised job descriptions, developed from employee-submitted questionnaires, were returned by the consulting firm and distributed to each employee and their department head for review, approval, or appeal. The board agreed that department heads and the Personnel Committee will review applicable department head job descriptions, with two weeks allotted for responses. Finalized descriptions are necessary for the firm to proceed with classification and pay scale recommendations, which are critical for upcoming labor negotiations. The Personnel Committee will meet with HR to review and finalize the documents and to discuss the Paid Family Medical Leave requirements that are effective January 1, 2026, and to discuss any potential changes to the County's short-term disability plan that may occur.

HIGHWAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Highway Engineer Taylor Amiot provided the following updates: The mill and overlay project from Highway 59 to County Road 5 has received its final layer of pavement, and shouldering work is currently underway. On the bypass project, the subgrade is nearly finished, and crews have begun placing fabric and gravel. A change order has been approved requiring RJ Zavoral to maintain EMS access throughout construction. The resurfacing of County Road 1 from Red Lake Falls to Plummer is planned for next year as part of a federal project. Applications are being accepted for the Oklee Motor Grader Operator position, and a demo John Deere grader is currently being tested due to operator challenges with the CAT model. A deteriorating truck box on a 2008 unit is under evaluation for repair or replacement, with cost estimates ranging from \$5,000 to repair/patch up to \$25,000 to replace the box completely. Additional updates included the sale of a pup trailer for \$2,300 and a nearby residential property for sale was discussed as a potential site for future garage space.

EXPENDITURES

Commissioner Mickelson moved, seconded by Commissioner Gerardy, and carried unanimously to approve the following expenditures for the period:

PROCEEDINGS OF THE RED LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Election Systems & Software Inc	\$15,668.02
North Central International LLC	\$ 7,695.08
Polk County Highway Department	\$10,000.00
Saber Shred Solutions LLC	\$ 2,615.70
Safety Compliance Services LLC	\$ 6,600.00
10 payments less than 2000	<u>\$ 3,602.35</u>
TOTAL	\$46,181.15

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Remick - None

Mickelson - None

Gerardy - None

Moran – None

Flage – One Watershed One Plan, Pennington and Red Lake Public Health & Home Care,

AUDITOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Auditor Kelsey Gervais gave a summary of updates from the MACATFO conference she attended last week. A key change was noted regarding tax-forfeited properties: the State of Minnesota will now retain mineral rights on all such parcels, with counties required to pay a \$50 registration fee per property. Several state aids were also discussed—PILT and County Program Aid will remain intact, but Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid is projected to be reduced by 2027, and Local Cannabis Aid (approximately \$2,100) is expected to be repealed in 2026. Gervais also provided a year-end analysis for the board. Lastly, commissioners discussed presenting the Farm Family of the Year award at the Red Lake County Fair on behalf of the Red Lake County Extension Committee, the board directed Gervais to contact Lisa Loegering or Emily Schmiedeberg to present the award.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Mickelson, seconded by Commissioner Remick, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 p.m. The next regular meeting of the board is scheduled for Tuesday, July 8th, at 10:00 a.m.

Attest: _____
Kelsey Gervais, County Auditor

Chuck Flage, Chairman
Board of Commissioner