

AITKIN COUNTY BOARD MINUTES

November 25, 2025

Call to Order

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met the 25th day of November, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Aitkin County Government Center with the following members present: Board Chair J. Mark Wedel, Commissioners Laurie Westerlund, Travis Leiviska, Bret Sample, Michael Kearney, County Administrator David Minke, and Administrative Assistant April Kellerman.

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 5-0 to approve the November 25, 2025 agenda as amended. Items 12A and 12B switched order. Item 2N moved to item 2.1.

There was no Citizens' Public Comment

Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 5-0 to approve the revised Consent Agenda as follows.

- A) Correspondence File November 12, 2025 to November 24, 2025;
- B) Approve November 12, 2025 County Board Minutes;
- C) Approve Electronic Funds Transfers Report thru 11.17.25 with a total of \$1,292,296.65;
- D) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants paid 11.07.25: Road & Bridge \$13,160.23;
- E) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants paid 11.10.25: Health & Human Services \$59,644.51
- F) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Sales Use and Diesel Tax paid 11.10.25: General Fund \$40.46, Road & Bridge \$1,795.66, Trust \$21.60, Long Lake Conservation Center \$173.60, Parks \$417.79 for a total of \$2,479.11;
- G) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Elan Paid 10.23.2025: General Fund \$2,161.04, Forest Development \$209.56, Health & Human Services \$1,506.31 for a total of \$3,876.91;
- H) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants paid 11.17.25: Health & Human Services \$59,644.51
- I) Approve Manual Warrants/Voids/Corrections – Manual Warrants paid 11.14.25: General Fund \$660.29, State \$163,862.64, Taxes & Penalties \$508.00 for a total of \$165,030.69
- J) Adopt Resolution #20251125-118: County On, Off and Sunday Sale Liquor License – Kirby's Place LLC;
- K) Approve Human Trafficking Joint Powers Agreement;
- L) Information Only on Cash Balance Report – October 2025
- M) Approve Auditor Vouchers – Auditor Warrants – Tax Settlements paid 11.21.25: Townships/Cities/ARDC/ Ambulance \$3,664,600.16;
- N) Approve Out of State Travel (moved to item 2.1);
- O) Approve Commissioner Vouchers – Commissioner Warrants paid 11.21.25: General Fund \$181,264.76, Road & Bridge \$280,057.20, Health & Human Services \$2,413.80, State \$8,590.74, Trust \$13,302.54, Forest Development \$1,819.60, Long Lake Conservation Center \$9,691.49, Parks \$2,576.14 for a total of \$499,716.27;
- P) Adopt Resolution #20251125-119: SAP 001-614-017 Resolution for LRIP Grant Application

2.1) Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Leiviska and carried 4-1 with Commissioners Wedel, Westerlund, Leiviska and Kearney voting yes and Commissioner Sample

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voting no to Approve Out-of-State Travel for Commissioners Kearney and Leiviska to attend the 2026 NACo Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, DC on February 21-24, 2026.

Regular Agenda

Kara Lindstrom – Field Representative for Congressman Stauber presented information on current issues.

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Kearney and carried 5-0 to Set the Public Hearing for Shoreland Ordinance Amendments on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. at the Aitkin County Government Center 3rd Floor Board Room.

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 5-0 to Approve New Permitting and Registration Software, subject to review by County Attorney.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 5-0 to Issue a Request For Proposal (RFP) to operate the Aitkin County Recycling Center and County recycling drop-off locations.

Motion by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 5-0 to Approve North Memorial Health Care Agreement for 2026 in the amount of \$43,000.

Motion by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 5-0 to Adopt Resolution **#20251125-120** Supporting Repeal of Minnesota's Nuclear Power Moratorium.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Kearney and carried 5-0 to Approve State Bonding Grant Agreement in the amount of \$2 million for Health & Human Services Building Remodel.

Motion by Commissioner Kearney, seconded by Commissioner Leiviska and carried 5-0 to Adopt Resolution **#20251125-121** to Award Contract #20261 with S&R Reinforcing Inc. in the amount of \$1,852,457.81.

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Leiviska and carried 5-0 to Adopt Resolution **#20251125-122** to Vacate Portion of CSAH 38 Right of Way.

John Welle – County Engineer presented Public Info/Input Meeting at 10:00 a.m. for Proposed Changes to Road Designations. Comment made by: Tom Veenker, Chairman of Wealthwood Township.

Motion by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 5-0 to Affirm there are no funds available for a 2026 Pictometry flight.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried, all members voted to Officially Reject Bids for the construction of the Mille Lacs ATV Trail project #2020-10981.

Chair Wedel called a recess at 10:25 a.m.
The Board reconvened at 10:32 a.m.

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Motion by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 3-2 with Commissioners Wedel, Leiviska and Sample voting yes and Commissioners Westerlund and Kearney voting no to Adopt Resolution #20251125-123 ,with for 2026 Appropriations:

Dues		
North Counties Land Use Coordinating Board (10-921.6240)	\$2,000	
MN Rural Counties Caucus (MRCC) (01-44.6844)	\$2,300	
Association of MN Counties (AMC) (01-44.6845)	\$15,477	
Arrowhead Counties (01-44.6846)	\$2,750	
Joint Counties Natural Resource Board (10-921.6240)	\$1,000	
Joint Powers		
East Central Regional Library (Dept 500-500.6801)	\$272,818	
Airport-McGregor (Dept 700-903.6801)	\$17,160	
Airport-Aitkin (Dept 700-903.6800)	\$60,000	
Mississippi Headwaters Board (Dept 600-552.6847)	\$1,500	
Appropriations		
Soil and Water (Dept 600-552.6801)	\$81,549	\$68,849 County Allocation \$7,700 LCWP \$5,000 Ag Inspector
C.A.R.E. (Dept 500-502.6848)	\$55,000	
Historical Society (Dept 500-501.6801)	\$26,250	
Historical Society Insurance (Dept 500)	\$6,263	
Ag Society (Dept 600-550.6801)	\$14,000	
Ag Society Capital Improvement (Dept 600-550.6843)	\$10,000	
Ag Society Insurance (Dept 600)	\$11,465	
Support Within Reach (01-44.6847)	\$3,000	
Total Dues & Appropriations	\$582,532	

Motion by Commissioner Kearney, seconded by Commissioner Leiviska and carried 4-1 with Commissioners Wedel, Westerlund, Leiviska and Kearney voting yes and Commissioner Sample voting no to Adopt Resolution #20251125-124 setting the 2026 County Commissioner's salary at \$38,693.03. Commissioners are not eligible to receive per diems from Aitkin County. Per diems may be accepted from other organizations in accordance with the law and the Aitkin County Code of Ethics.

Motion by Commissioner Leiviska, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 3-2 with Commissioners Wedel, Leiviska and Sample voting yes and Commissioners Westerlund and Kearney voting no to Adopt Resolution #20251125-125 Approving an Off Sale Liquor License for OM Malmo, LLC dba Malmo Market 32060 220th St, Aitkin, MN 56431.

Mark Jeffers – Economic Development Coordinator presented an Economic Development Update.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Kearney and carried 5-0 to Approve Agreement – Minnesota Housing Finance Agency for the Minnesota City participation program for 2026.

Mark Jeffers – Economic Development Coordinator presented Strategic Plan and Revitalization Updates.

Health & Human Services Revitalization Team (Sarah Johnson, Brenda Butterfield, Jon Moen & Nikki Laird) presented H&HS Psychological Safety Survey Results & team Updates.

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Chair Wedel called a recess at 12:07 p.m.
The Board reconvened at 12:11 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Sample, seconded by Commissioner Kearney and carried 5-0 to Ratify the 2026-2028 Teamsters Non-Licensed Essential Unit Agreement.

Motion by Commissioner Kearney, seconded by Commissioner Westerlund and carried 5-0 to Ratify the 2026-2028 LELS Licensed Essentials Unit Agreement.

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Kearney and carried 5-0 to Approve Job Re-evaluation (Accounting Technician, HHS Dept.).

Commissioner Committee Reports

The Board discussed: Lakes & Pines, Historical Society, Aitkin County CARE Board, Arrowhead Counties Association, Arrowhead Regional Development Committee, Budget Committee, Aitkin Airport Commission, Aitkin County Water Planning Task Force, Aquatic Invasive Species, Sobriety Court

Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Kearney, seconded by Commissioner Sample and carried 5-0 yes to adjourn the meeting at 12:26 p.m. with the next meeting on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at the Aitkin County Government Center.

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

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