

**AITKIN COUNTY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING/COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
April 21, 2026**

Call to Order

The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners met the 21st day of April, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the Aitkin Government Center with the following members present: Board Chair J. Mark Wedel, Commissioners Laurie Westerlund and Bret Sample. Commissioner Michael Kearney was present via interactive technology due to an out-of-town commitment and was seen and heard in the meeting room. Also present were County Administrator David Minke, Administrative Assistant April Kellerman, Land Commissioner D.J. Thompson, County Auditor Kathleen Ryan, Economic Development Coordinator Mark Jeffers, Facilities Coordinator Jim Bright, County Sheriff Dan Guida and Long Lake Conservation Center Staff: Manager Dave McMillan, Education Coordinator Beth Haasken, Food Service Coordinator Joel Hoppe and Naturalists Katie Murphy, Marla Richter and Julia Kuhns.

Commissioner Travis Leiviska was absent.

Land Commissioner D.J. Thompson presented on the Long Lake Conservation Center including information on the history and purpose, economic impact, operating budget, programming, current needs and capital improvements, and opportunities.

Public comments by Long Lake Conservation Foundation president Bob Marcum, Long Lake Conservation Foundation Board Member Pat Murphy and Long Lake Conservation Board member and McGregor Schools Community Education Director Cheryl Meld, who brought some students in to talk about their experiences at Long Lake Conservation Center.

Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Westerlund, seconded by Commissioner Sample and upon a roll call vote carried 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 3:02 p.m. with the next regular meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2026 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