

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Board Vice Chair Roger Tellinghuisen called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM with the following commissioners present: Commissioners Whitcomb, Tellinghuisen, Reynolds, Bjornson and Munson. Commissioner Reynolds was present via interactive technology.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVE THE AGENDA (ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS)

A motion was made by Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Bjornson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to approve the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Bjornson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to approve the consent agenda.

CONSIDER NOVEMBER 18, 2025, COUNTY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

CONSIDER PURCHASE OF SERVICE CONTRACT WITH VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA

CONSIDER CY2026 FERNBROOK FAMILY CENTER CONTRACT

CONSIDER RESOLUTION 12-02-25-01: 2025 AIS PREVENTION AID

*Board of County Commissioners
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota*

Resolution No.: 12-02-25-01

A RESOLUTION REGARDING AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION AID

WHEREAS 2014 Session Law Chapter 308 enacted by the Legislature and subsequently reauthorized, provides Minnesota counties a County Program Aid for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention. The amount designated for each county is based on the number of watercraft trailer launches as well as the number of watercraft trailer parking spaces within each County; and

WHEREAS, the legislation requires that Mille Lacs County must establish, by resolution or through adoption of a plan, guidelines for the use of the proceeds which are to prevent the introduction or limit the spread of AIS at all access sites within the county; and

WHEREAS the County may appropriate the proceeds directly or may use any portion of the proceeds to provide funding for a joint powers board or cooperative agreement with another political subdivision, a soil and water conservation district in the county, a watershed district in the county, or a lake association located in the county. Any money appropriated by the County to a different entity or political subdivision must be used as required under this section; and

WHEREAS the County must submit a copy of its guidelines for the use of the proceeds to the Department of Natural Resources by December 31 of the year the payments are received.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mille Lacs County Board of Commissioners that the 2025 budget listed in the table below is hereby adopted.

Salaries & Wages	\$108,565
Co Share Health Insurance	\$16,653
Co Share Dental Insurance	\$631
Co Share Life Insurance	\$22
Pera-Co Share	\$8,142
Fica-Co Share	\$6,731

Medicare-Co Share	\$1,574
Phone	\$0
Professional Services	\$4,000
Office Supplies	\$900
Total Expenditures	\$147,218

Adopted this 2nd day of December 2025.

REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATOR WARRANTS

CONSIDER COMMISSIONERS MILEAGE AND PER DIEMS — NOVEMBER 2025

REGULAR AGENDA

LAND SERVICES OFFICE

CONSIDER PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Zoning Administrator Keenan Hayes presented the agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Bjornson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to approve the planning commission recommendation.

COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

CONSIDER MODIFICATION TO IT POLICY ON EMAIL RETENTION FOR THE SHERIFF,
COUNTY ATTORNEY

Sheriff Kyle Burton presented the agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Munson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to table the request for additional staff review of viable solutions.

CONSIDER CONTRACT WITH MILACA SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR A SCHOOL RESOUC
DEPUTY

Sheriff Burton presented the agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Whitcomb and unanimously carried by roll call vote to approve the contract with the Milaca School District for a School Resource Officer.

PUBLIC WORKS

CONSIDER FINAL ACCEPTANCE OF SP 048-070-013 HSIP STRIPING PROJECT

Public Works Director Wesley Davis presented the agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Munson, seconded by Commissioner Bjornson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to authorize the Final Acceptance of Work for Mille Lacs County SP 048-070-013 and approve Final Payment in the amount of \$14,308.39 to Sir Lines-A-Lot, LLC.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION 12-02-25-02: 2026 DRAINAGE SYSTEM ASSESSMENTS

Public Works Director Davis presented the agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Munson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to adopt Resolution 12-02-25-02.

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
MILLE LACS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR PUBLIC DRAINAGE SYSTEMS UNDER ITS JURISDICTION

At the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners on December 2, 2025, the Board was presented with information regarding drainage system costs and assessments necessary to pay drainage system costs and establish drainage system maintenance funds. Based on the information provided, Commissioner Whitcomb moved adoption of the following:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, section 103E.725 provides, all fees and costs incurred relating to a drainage system, including repairs, inspections, engineering, viewing, and publications, are costs of the drainage system and must be assessed against the property and entities benefited; and

WHEREAS, some drainage system accounts for systems administered by the Board carry negative balances and others will benefit from establishment of a maintenance fund. The negative-balance system accounts have benefited from inter-fund loans from the general fund of the County or from other drainage system funds. If the Board transfers money from another account or fund to a drainage system account, the money, plus interest, must be reimbursed from the proceeds of the drainage system that received the transfer; and

WHEREAS, if there is not enough money in the drainage system account to pay drainage system costs, the Board must assess the costs on all property and entities that have been assessed benefits for the drainage system. If the assessments are not more than 50 percent of the original cost of the drainage system, the installments may not exceed ten. If the assessments are greater than 50 percent of the original cost of the drainage system, the Board may order the assessments to be paid in 15 or less installments; and

WHEREAS, if assessments are to be paid in installments, the Board may set an interest rate not to exceed seven percent (7%) per year to be collected with each installment; and

WHEREAS, section 103E.735 allows the creation of a repair fund for each drainage system. The repair fund is intended to create a positive balance in a drainage system account to pay routine costs of inspection and minor maintenance and eliminate the need for inter-fund loans to drainage system accounts; and

WHEREAS, to create a repair fund, the drainage authority may apportion and assess an amount against all property and entities assessed for benefits. The fund may not exceed 20 percent of the assessed benefits of the drainage system or \$100,000, whichever is greater. Assessments may be made payable, by order, in equal annual installments; and

WHEREAS, County staff have investigated the current drainage system funds and made a recommendation for assessments, installment schedules, interest rates, and maintenance funds.

THEREFORE, the Board of Commissioners of Mille Lacs County, Drainage Authority for the ditches listed below, adopts the following drainage system assessments, installment schedules, interest rates, and maintenance funds and directs certification thereof to the County Auditor for collection:

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 1:
Total to be assessed: \$162,500
Years Assessed: 2
Interest rate on installments: 3.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 2A:
Total to be assessed: \$850.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 2B:
Total to be assessed: \$5,500
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 3:
Total to be assessed: \$500.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 4:
Total to be assessed: \$14,000

Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 5:
Total to be assessed: \$500.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 6:
Total to be assessed: \$500.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 7:
Total to be assessed: \$500.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 11:
Total to be assessed: \$500.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

Mille Lacs County Ditch # 14B:
Total to be assessed: \$15,000.00
Years Assessed: 1
Interest rate on installments: 0.0%

This resolution shall serve as the Board’s assessment order as required by statutes chapter 103E.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES OFFICE

CONSIDER RESOLUTION 12-02-25-03 & 12-02-25-04: IMPLEMENTATION OF PERA PHASED RETIREMENT OPTION (PRO)

Personnel Director Karly Feters presented the agenda item. A motion was made by Commissioner Bjornson, seconded by Commissioner Munson and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution 12-02-25-03 and Resolution 12-02-25-04.

Board of County Commissioners
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota

Resolution No.: 12-02-25-03

RESOLUTION REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF PERA PHASED RETIREMENT OPTION (PRO)

WHEREAS the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) administers the Phased Retirement Option (PRO), which allows eligible employees to begin receiving PERA retirement benefits while continuing to work on a reduced schedule; and

WHEREAS employer participation in the PRO is discretionary, and the employer is responsible only for statutory reporting and hour-monitoring requirements, not for the terms of the PERA agreement itself; and

WHEREAS the employer must retain full flexibility to manage staffing and discontinue the arrangement if it no longer meets organizational needs.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Mille Lacs County Board of Commissioners hereby approves Michael Virnig’s participation in the PERA Phased Retirement Option (PRO), subject to the following conditions:

1. **Employer Discretion.** Approval of PRO participation does not guarantee continued employment or a specific work schedule. The employer retains authority to modify or end employment as operational needs require.
2. **External Agreement.** The PRO Agreement is solely a PERA document, and the employer is not a party to it beyond required administrative duties, including reporting and monitoring hours.
3. **Mutual Benefit.** Participation in the PRO shall continue only so long as it remains mutually beneficial; the employer may discontinue participation consistent with standard employment policies.
4. **Delegation of Authority.** The Personnel Director is authorized to complete the employer sections of the PRO Agreement and administer the arrangement consistent with this resolution.

Adopted this 2nd day of December 2025.

**Board of County Commissioners
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

Resolution No.: 12-02-25-04

**RESOLUTION REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF PERA PHASED RETIREMENT
OPTION (PRO)**

WHEREAS the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) administers the Phased Retirement Option (PRO), which allows eligible employees to begin receiving PERA retirement benefits while continuing to work on a reduced schedule; and

WHEREAS employer participation in the PRO is discretionary, and the employer is responsible only for statutory reporting and hour-monitoring requirements, not for the terms of the PERA agreement itself; and

WHEREAS the employer must retain full flexibility to manage staffing and discontinue the arrangement if it no longer meets organizational needs.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Mille Lacs County Board of Commissioners hereby approves Susan Koosman's participation in the PERA Phased Retirement Option (PRO), subject to the following conditions:

1. **Employer Discretion.** Approval of PRO participation does not guarantee continued employment or a specific work schedule. The employer retains authority to modify or end employment as operational needs require.
2. **External Agreement.** The PRO Agreement is solely a PERA document, and the employer is not a party to it beyond required administrative duties, including reporting and monitoring hours.
3. **Mutual Benefit.** Participation in the PRO shall continue only so long as it remains mutually beneficial; the employer may discontinue participation consistent with standard employment policies.
4. **Delegation of Authority.** The Personnel Director is authorized to complete the employer sections of the PRO Agreement and administer the arrangement consistent with this resolution.

Adopted this 2nd day of December 2025.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Bjornson attended the monthly County leadership team meeting. Commissioner Reynolds attended the ECRDC meeting, where they interviewed candidates for the vacant director position.

TRUTH-IN-TAXATION PUBLIC HEARING

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Munson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to recess the meeting until 6:00 PM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Bjornson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to resume the meeting at 5:59 PM.

Introductions were made by the commissioners. County Administrator Dillon Hayes presented information regarding the budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Munson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to open the public hearing at 6:26 PM. Vice Chair Tellinghuisen called for public comment; the following individuals were present to speak:

- Nick Burlow, 10306 160th Avenue, Foreston – Mr. Burlow asked about the County’s plans for 2027 and beyond, assuming Federal and State funding is reduced because of recent legislative changes.
- Breck Swanson, Onamia – Mr. Swanson asked about the reasons Mille Lacs County is in the top five with respect to property tax rate.

Commissioner Whitcomb and Administrator Hayes provided additional information in response to the questions raised by Mr. Burlow and Mr. Swanson.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bjornson, seconded by Commissioner Whitcomb, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to close the public hearing at 6:35 PM.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitcomb, seconded by Commissioner Bjornson, and unanimously carried by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

Dillon Hayes
County Administrator

Genny Reynolds
County Board Chairperson