MINUTES
CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, November 4, 2026
TIME: 9:00 AM
PLACE: Courthouse – Room 300

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Russ Perlock, Tim Hovendick, Wayne Schulz (via WebEx), George Gilbertson

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Victoria Wilson, Planning & Zoning; See attached sign-in list

1. Chairman Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and declared a quorum present.

2. There were no public comments.

3. The minutes of the October 7 and October 14, 2026, meetings were presented. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion Hovendick/Perlock to approve the vouchers, monthly department reports and committee reports. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Discussion on the State Water Quality Request resolution took place. Chair Pliml felt the resolution could use more concise and compelling language. Motion by Hovendick/Russ Perlock to rephrase the State Water Quality Request resolution to be ready for presentation at the December County Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Area Extension Director McNelly updated the committee on the annual contract for services and the hiring updates for the Cranberry Specialist and Natural Resources Educator positions.

7. County Planner Simkowski gave an overview of the Wood County Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Plan and Community Survey resolution. Motion Hovendick/Buttke to forward the resolution to County Board for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Simkowski presented a Town of Grand Rapids Zoning Map Amendment. Motion Perlock/Hovendick to forward the Zoning Map Amendment to County Board for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Meredith Kleker, Wisconsin Rapids Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, along with Paul Bernard shared the vision and progress for a Wood County Trails map project. Motion Buttke/Perlock to release the economic development grant funding of $5,000 for the project. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Planning and Zoning Director Grueneberg reported that the City of Marshfield pulled funding for the survey work for Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds and the Mainstreet Marshfield development of a downtown master plan. Without matching funds from the City for these two

projects, the county will not consider providing REDI implementation funding at this time. No action taken.

11. County Conservationist Wucherpfennig shared the one bid that was submitted for the Gilbertson barnyard project. Mid Wisconsin Concrete & Excavating submitted a bid for $76,512.01. Motion Buttke/Schulz to accept the bid. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Wucherpfennig provided updates on the ARPA funded projects.

13. Wucherpfennig provided information on and upcoming Central WI Farm Profitability Expo and North Central Land Water Conservation Association Winter meeting.

14. A brief budget discussion took place with some clarification from Pliml on how the current Cost of Living Adjustment proposal for Wood County employees will be affected if approved by the full County Board at November's budget hearing.

15. The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, December 2nd, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

16. Department head evaluation will be on the next agenda.

17. Chair Leichtnam declared the meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM.

Minutes taken by Victoria Wilson, Planning & Zoning Program Assistant, and are in draft form until approved at the next meeting.

Conservation, Education, & Economic Development Committee
November 4, 2026

NAME	REPRESENTING
DENNIS POLACH	WCB - 14
Bill Clendenning	
Emmett Simkowski	P+Z
Shane Wiehert Ferris	LWCD
George Gilbertson ✓	LWCD Rep.
Victoria Wilson	P & Z
Meredith Kleber	Wis Rapids Area CVB/Tourism
Paul Bernard	P-Z
Jen McNelly (Web Ex)	Extension