

# MINUTES

## CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**DATE:** Wednesday, July 1, 2026

**TIME:** 9:00 AM

**PLACE:** Courthouse – Room 300

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Russ Perlock, Tim Hovendick, George Gilbertson

**MEMBER EXCUSED:** Wayne Schulz

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Trent Miner, County Clerk; 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 June 5, 2026, meeting were presented. Motion by Buttke/Perlock to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Motion Buttke/Perlock to approve the vouchers, monthly department reports and committee reports. Motion carried unanimously.
5. County Planner Simkowski presented a preliminary plat for C&C Acres, a subdivision in the Town of Saratoga. It meets all county requirements. Motion by Hovendick/Perlock to approve the preliminary plat for C&C Acres as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
6. Rick Schmidt from the City of Nekoosa presented a request for economic development dollars to replace blacktop between the two shelter houses at Riverside Park in Nekoosa as well as some repair to the bike path. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the release of \$10,000 of economic development grant dollars to the City of Nekoosa. Motion carried unanimously.
7. Denise Sonnemann from the Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry presented highlights from their 2025 annual report and requested release of the ear-marked economic development grant funds. Motion by Perlock/Buttke to approve the release of \$25,000 of economic development grant funds to MACCI. Motion carried unanimously.
8. Staci Kivi from the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce presented highlights from their 2025 annual report and requested release of the ear-marked economic development grant funds. Motion by Hovendick/Perlock to approve the release of \$25,000 of economic development grant HOW Chamber of Commerce. Motion carried unanimously.
9. Sarah Franklin from the Child Care Center of Marshfield highlighted the work done to modernize their facility and requested release of the ear-marked economic development grant funds. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to release \$13,000 of economic development grant funds to Child Care Center of Marshfield. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Meredith Klecker from Wisconsin Rapids Convention & Visitors Bureau provided the committee with a project scope and rationale behind having an indoor recreation facility in South Wood County. She is requesting \$7,500 of REDI Grant funding to fund a more detailed feasibility study on such a project. Motion by Perlock/Hovendick to approve the release of \$7,500 of REDI Grant funding for the feasibility study. Motion carried unanimously.
11. Planning & Zoning Director, in the absence of any representative from the Central Wisconsin State Fair, brought forth a request from the Executive Director of the Fair for \$30,000 of REDI Grant funding to update the sewer system for the wash rack at the fairgrounds. Motion by Hovendick/Perlock to postpone this request until after the CEED Committee reviews the economic development grant applications for next year. Motion carried unanimously.
12. County Conservationist Wucherpennig informed the committee that no bids were received for the Lippert stream crossing project so this will be coming back next month. Wucherpennig reported that some rules for bidding have changed, and he would like to discuss the streamlining of the bidding process to be more inline with DATCP rules. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.
13. Wucherpennig updated the committee on NR151 compliance from the state. Of the 16 farms that the state asked us to review, 11 have been closed out, 1 of the farmers just recently passed away, and 4 others have not been able to be contacted.
14. Wucherpennig reported that another 30 well owners in the "hot spots" for nitrates have agreed to have their water tested. The testing will be conducted at UWSP and entered into the state database. More information will follow.
15. Extension Area Director McNelly reviewed the 4H Membership Campaign that will be conducted this year. Funding for this effort will come from the sale of the Meadowbrook 4H Club land that was sold recently.
16. McNelly and Extension Educator Rombalski reviewed the participation of the clean sweeps during the past couple of years. They reviewed the budgetary implications and noted that there should be enough funding for approximately the next 4 years. After that, some other funding mechanism would be needed to keep the program going at the current level. More information will follow.
17. The next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, August 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM. A special committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> to review the economic development grant applications.
18. Motion by Hovendick/Buttke to go into closed session pursuant to Wis Stats 19.85 (1)(f) to consider of leave of absence request. Motion carried unanimously.
19. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to move back into open session. Motion carried unanimously.
20. Chair Leichtnam adjourned the meeting at 10:46 AM.

Minutes taken by Trent Miner, County Clerk, and are in draft form until approved at the next meeting.

Conservation, Education, & Economic Development Committee

July 1, 2026

NAME	REPRESENTING
Jason Gruenberg	P+Z
Emmett Sinkowski	P+Z
DENNIS POLACH	WCB-14
Bill Cleveland	WCB-15
Rick Schmitt	NEKOOSA
Staci Kivi	How Chamber
Denise Sonnemann	MACTI
Sarah Franklin	Child Care Centers of Mfld
Debra Bowshack	" " " " " "
George Gilbertson	LWC Rep
Shane Wucherpfennig	LWCD
Meredith Alexander	W's Rapids Area CURB
Victoria Wilson	P+Z
Kayla Rombalski	Extension
<del>Julie Manel (WebEx)</del>	<del>P+Z</del>
<del>Barb Peeters (WebEx)</del>	<del>LWCD</del>
<del>Darrin Steinbach (WebEx)</del>	<del>Finance</del>
<del>Katie Dekleyn (WebEx)</del>	<del>County Clerk</del>
<del>Lance Pliml (WebEx)</del>	<del>CB Chair</del>
<del>Kayla Rombalski (WebEx)</del>	<del>Extension</del>
<del>Brad Hamilton (WebEx)</del>	<del>County Board # 18</del>