

MINUTES

CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, June 5, 2026
TIME: 9:00 AM
PLACE: Courthouse – Room 300

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Wayne Schulz, Russ Perlock, Tim Hovendick

MEMBER EXCUSED: George Gilbertson

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 May 6, 2026, meeting were presented. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Motion Hovendick/Schulz to approve the vouchers, monthly department reports and committee reports. Motion carried unanimously.
5. County Planner Simkowski presented a resolution to approve the Town of Lincoln Zoning Amendment regulating solar energy systems. Motion by Schulz/Hovendick to approve the resolution and forward on to the county board for their consideration. Motion carried unanimously.
6. David Eaton from Columbus High School was present and reported on the progress of the Columbus High School field house addition and activities already hosted there. They are requesting payment of the economic development grant funding allotted for this project. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approved releasing \$12,000 for this project. Motion carried unanimously.
7. Dale Christensen from the Central Wisconsin State Fair is requesting REDI Implementation Grant Funding to fund the upgrade for a sewer system connection from the current wash rack. The committee stated this will be addressed next month so as to ascertain what funding is actually available for this project and which funding source is more appropriate.
8. The CEED Tour was discussed. It is tentatively set for Friday, October 2nd.
9. Chair Leichtnam opened up the conversation of enhancing economic development in the county. Extension Educator Rombalski highlighted the definition of economic development and reviewed possible next steps. Future meetings were tentatively set to review the status of economic development in Wood County. The chambers of commerce will be invited as well.
10. Land & Water Conservation Administrative Specialist Peeters introduced the new summer intern, Abby Leis to the group.

11. One bid was received for the Gilbertson grassed waterway project. It was from DeBoer Excavating in the amount of \$4,450 and was below the estimated amount. Motion by Schulz/Hovendick to approve the bid from DeBoer Excavating in the amount of \$4,450. Motion carried unanimously.
12. Peeters reminded the committee of the LCC Training coming up next week in Merrill.
13. Extension Area Director McNelly highlighted items in the report included in the committee packet.
14. McNelly reviewed the action of the committee last month combining two half time positions for Natural Resources Educator into one full-time, county funded position. The contract as been amended to show these changes and was shared with the committee. Motion by Buttke/Schulz to approve amended contract as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
15. The next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, July 1st at 9:00 AM..
16. Chair Leichtnam adjourned the meeting at 10:19 AM.

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

**Conservation, Education, & Economic Development Committee
June 5, 2026**

NAME	REPRESENTING
Jeff Penzkover	CB District 11
Bill Clesdennig	WCB # 15
Victoria Wilson	P # 2
Barbara Peters	LWCD
Abby Leis	LWCD
Emmett Simkowski	P+Z
David Eaton	Columbus Catholic
Dale Christiansen	CWSF
Jen McNelly	UWEX
Darrin Steinbach (Web Ex)	Finance
Kayla Rombalski (Web Ex)	Extension
Katie Beckley (Web Ex)	County Clerk