

MINUTES

CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 2026

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Courthouse – Room 302

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Wayne Schulz (WebEx), Russ Perlock, Tim Hovendick, 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. Under Chair's Comments, Leichtnam recognized Shane Wucherpfennig on his 35 years of service to the county.
4. No bids were received for the Gilbertson grassed waterway project. Wucherpfennig will reach out to more contractors and may have this on the agenda for next month.
5. Wucherpfennig highlighted the activities of the Mill Creek Watershed large scale TMR grant. He reviewed the amount received for the grant and the projects that have been completed. He is reapplying for another grant for this purpose.
6. Wucherpfennig reviewed the current status of the Mill Creek chloride issue and noted that the City of Marshfield will be conducting a plumbing inspection of a facility that may be the source of the chloride in the next week and will involve the wastewater treatment department as well. More information will follow.
7. Wucherpfennig brought the committee up to date on the current violations.
8. Chair Leichtnam highlighted the upcoming Citizens Water Group meeting of March 16th and the speakers that will be presenting information to that group.
9. Representatives of the Remington Fire Department presented an update on their construction project at their fire station and requested the release of the assigned economic development grant funding. Motion by Buttke/Perlock to approve the release of the \$9,000 economic development grant funding assigned to this project. Motion carried unanimously.
10. The minutes of the February 4, 2026, meeting were presented. Motion by Hovendick/Perlock to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
11. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the vouchers, monthly department reports and committee reports. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Planning & Zoning Code Administrator Cook presented the annual report of private sewage systems put in place in 2025 in Wood County and reviewed past numbers as well.
13. County Planner Simkowski presented the United States National Guard & Reserve Patriotic Employer Recognition to Director Grueneberg for his support of Simkowski's involvement with the National Guard.
14. Code Technician Koziczowski presented the annual report of well permits to the committee and highlighted the total number of wells drilled and put in throughout the county. She reviewed the requirements and setbacks for drilled wells.
15. Extension Educator Rombalski reviewed the actions taken by the Child Care Task Force with the allocated ARPA funding including projects in both the City of Wisconsin Rapids adding capacity to an existing daycare, as well as in the City of Marshfield at a Montessori school.
16. Director Grueneberg reviewed the current status of the 2027 Economic Development Grant process. The request for proposals will go out in the next couple of weeks with a deadline for return in the beginning of July.
17. The new Extension Area Director, Jen McNelly, was introduced to the committee. With her promotion comes a vacancy in the Natural Resources area. The other natural resources educator was reassigned to a different location, so Wood County is down both Natural Resource educators at the present time. McNelly is requesting ideas on what is expected out of the 2 educators by the committee and get back to her with your thoughts. More information will be forthcoming in this regard as will the funding mechanism for both positions.
18. The following request for per diems were brought forth to the committee:
 - Leichtnam – Huddle Up Sports Tourism session.
 - Leichtnam – Leadership class/Heart of Wisconsin
 - Hovendick – Mill Creek Watershed annual meeting
 - Perlock – Citizens Water GroupMotion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the per diem requests as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
19. The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at 9:00 AM.
20. Chair Leichtnam declared the meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.

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

**Conservation, Education, & Economic Development Committee
March 4, 2026**

NAME	REPRESENTING
Bill Cleodunig	WCR # 15
DENNIS POLACH	WCB - # 14
Emmett Simkowski	F+Z
Kayla Kozickowski	P+Z
Brad Cook	P+Z
Jan Brockman	RVFD
Rodney Brockman	Remington Vol. Fire Dept.
Sen McNelly	UWEX
Shane McHenry	LWED
Barb Peters	LWED
Kyle Andrew	LWED
Kayla Rombalski	Extension
Jason Gruenberg	P+Z
Victoria Wilson	P+Z
Julie Manel	P+Z
Kayla Rombalski	Extension
Darrin Steinbach	Finance