

REGULAR SESSION OF THE MOWER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

September 23, 2025

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in Regular Session September 23, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Chair Polly Glynn, Vice-Chair Dan Sparks, Jerry Reinartz, Mike Ankeny and John Mueller. Also in attendance were County Administrator Matthew Verdick and County Attorney Kristen Nelsen.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Prior to the Board meeting the County hosted a breakfast for employees being recognized for years of service.

Employee	# of Years	Department	Employee	# of Years	Department
Doris Hoy	40	Health & Human Services	Angela Bryand	10	Health & Human Services
Sara Moe	30	Attorney	Michael Kellar	10	Assessor
David Pike	30	Sheriff	Lisa Borreson	10	Health & Human Services
Nitaya Jandragholica	25	Corrections	Dawn Davidson	10	Health & Human Services
Valerie Kruger	25	Health & Human Services	Kyle Mullenbach	5	Highway
Jane Knutson	25	Health & Human Services	Darr Ehmke	5	Health & Human Services
Mark Wemimont	25	Corrections	Mayra Imperial	5	Health & Human Services
Stephen King	20	Corrections	Angela Paris	5	Recorder
Tony Klapperick	20	Highway	Kari Swigerd	5	Auditor-Treasurer
Evan Sorenson	15	Sheriff	Debra Eul	5	Health & Human Services
Kandace Feist	15	Health & Human Services	Shelby Peach	5	Dispatch
Beverly Atzl	15	Health & Human Services	Robert Jax	5	Highway
Lonnie Arndt	15	Jail	Scott Emanuel	5	Highway
Elizabeth Nelson	15	Health & Human Services	Brady Rueb	5	Sheriff
Robert Bailey	15	Facilities	Mark Stone	5	IT
John Jorgenson	15	Jail	Rodney Streich	5	Veterans
Mark Morrison	15	Jail	Erich Hanson	5	Highway
Brian Waller	15	Jail	Julie Lowe	5	Health & Human Services
Jamie Meyer	15	Sheriff	Lori Wills	5	Health & Human Services
Julie Tufte	10	Bailiff	Tracy Hauschildt	5	Dispatch
Nina Blazevic	10	Health & Human Services	Lacey Rector	5	Health & Human Services
Brittany Lewis	10	Health & Human Services	Heather Kjos Schmit	5	Attorney

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Mueller, to approve the consent agenda as presented:

1. Approve Minutes of September 9, 2025
2. Acknowledge the Receipt of Electronic Fund Transfer Payment Reports
3. Approve list of surplus property for auction, donation and/or disposal as applicable (from Jail: 1 devilbiss 5L Oxygen Concentrator; 1 Motorola Digital UHF Model XPR6550 portable radio) 6
4. Approve 90-day extension of Interim Winona County Assessor professional services contract

5. Resolution to approve MN Lawful Gambling Exempt Permit application of Root River Antique Historical Power Assn., Inc. for raffle 7/19/2026

Date: September 23, 2025

Res. #46-25

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Mueller, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held September 23, 2025 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, on September 23, 2025 the Root River Antique Historical Power Assn., Inc. presented for approval a Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for gambling to be conducted at the Root River Antique Historical Power Assn., Inc., Spring Valley, MN on July 29, 2026.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Mower County Board of Commissioners does hereby approve the LG220 Minnesota Lawful Gambling License for Root River Antique Historical Power Assn., Inc. for gambling at Root River Antique Historical Power Assn., Inc., Spring Valley, MN on July 19, 2026.

Passed and adopted this 23rd day of September, 2025.

6. Motion designating Crystal Peterson as Privacy Officer and Cameron Heard as Security Officer for Mower County Health & Human Services effective 9/9/2025

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to set the preliminary 2026 levy at \$29,508,534. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to set date and time for the annual budget and levy public hearing for Monday, December 15, 2025 at 6:30 pm. as the date and time for the 2026 budget and levy public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Human Resource Director Kris Kohn presented 2026 ancillary benefit information for approval. The recommendation is to select Met Life as the carrier for all ancillary benefits for the 2026 plan year.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Mueller, to approve the ancillary benefits for 2026 as follows:

Ancillary Benefit	2025		2026	
	Carrier	Annual Premium	Carrier	Annual Premium
Dental	MetLife	\$158,278	MetLife	\$170,945
Vision	Avesis	14,724	MetLife	20,040
Life/AD&D	Securian Life	15,270	MetLife	21,169
Short-Term Disability	Guardian	196,240	MetLife	38,878
MN PFML	NA	NA	MetLife	189,704
Accident	Guardian	13,680	MetLife	12,312
Hospital Indemnity	Guardian	11,328	MetLife	10,188

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the 2026 Medicare supplement plan with Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Monthly Premium

	2025	2026
Medical	\$195.00	\$171.00
Drug	\$134.50	\$159.00
Total	\$329.50	\$330.00

Motion carried unanimously.

The County and the current elected Auditor-Treasurer have been in discussions regarding the option to make the position of Auditor-Treasurer an appointed position rather than an elected position in accordance with MN Stat. 375A.1205 through a reverse referendum and with the consent of the incumbent through an employment contract.

Motion made by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to accept and authorize signatures on the Employment Agreement with Scott Felten County Auditor-Treasurer effective December 1, 2025 notwithstanding public petition. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to authorize publication of the notice of intent to hold a public hearing on October 28, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. regarding making the position of Auditor-Treasurer an appointed position. Motion carried unanimously.

Human Resources Director Kristina Kohn reported that a Request For Proposals process has been performed to seek a new company to perform a compensation and class study for the County. Three vendors were interviewed and the Personnel Committee recommends selecting Flaherty & Hood for the study.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to accept the proposal of Flaherty & Hood and enter into a contract for a compensation and class study at a cost not to exceed \$65,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the General Parts, LLC / GP Foodservice Equipment Service preventative/planned maintenance agreement for the jail kitchen appliances effective 9/1/25 – 8/31/26 (\$580 not including service calls and parts). Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to adopt the FR Secure provided draft IT Policies to be effective January 1, 2026 with minor revisions to the drafted policies for Mower County policy consistencies. The list of policies adopted is as follows:

<i>Acceptable Use Policy</i>	<i>AI Acceptable Use Policy</i>
<i>Asset Management Policy</i>	<i>Auditing Policy</i>
<i>Change Control Policy</i>	<i>Continuity and Recovery Policy</i>
<i>Encryption Management Policy</i>	<i>Identity and Access management Policy</i>
<i>Incident Management Policy</i>	<i>Information Classification and Management Policy</i>
<i>Information Security Policy</i>	<i>PCI Policy</i>
<i>Personnel Security and Awareness Policy</i>	<i>Physical Security Policy</i>

<i>Remote Work Policy</i>	<i>Risk Management Policy</i>
<i>System Development and Procurement Policy</i>	<i>Vendor Management Policy</i>
<i>Vulnerability Management Policy</i>	<i>Appendix of Definitions for all IT related policies</i>

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board recessed at 9:57 a.m. for the purpose of public hearings.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 9:57 a.m. regarding a Housing Tax Abatement request of Alan & Melinda Lenhart for a shouse located at 11.25 AC Bldg Site along E line E1/2 SE1/4; SEE DOC#665940-941 Section 14 Bennington Twp, Mower County, MN (PIN 03.014.0030).

County Administrator Matthew Verdick reviewed the application and recommended approval.

The applicant was present but did not speak. No one spoke for or against the Lenhart housing tax abatement application.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 9:58 a.m. regarding the Lenhart Housing Tax Abatement application.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing at 9:58 a.m. regarding amending the Cannabis Ordinance to Regulate Cannabis Businesses.

Angie Lipelt, Environmental Services Director, reviewed the proposed modifications to the Cannabis to regulate businesses Ordinance noting that the Planning Commission has approved these modifications and recommended approval to the County Board. A summary of the recommended amendments to comply with legislation changes is as follows:

- Mower County will register retail cannabis businesses within the rural jurisdictions of Mower County and any local unit of government who has entered into a joint power agreement with Mower County for cannabis license registration. This will be known as Mower County's cannabis license "registration jurisdiction."
- Mower County will limit the number of retail cannabis businesses to four (4) in the areas of Mower County's license jurisdiction.
- Mower County will consider cannabis business registration at the time of preliminary approval has been granted to an applicant by the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM). This would comply with legislative changes adopted and effective in May 2025. Mower County ordinance currently allows for registration at the time of final approval by OCM.

The Chair asked for public input. No one spoke for or against amending the Cannabis Ordinance to Regulate Cannabis Businesses.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 10:10 a.m. regarding amending the Cannabis Regulated Business Ordinance.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing at 10:10 a.m. regarding amending the Zoning Ordinance to adopt Article IX for large / SPECIAL events which is an ordinance that regulates the operation, responsibilities, and management of large special events within

Mower County, (outside of municipal boundaries) to protect the health, safety and general welfare of citizens and partakers. Ordinance includes exemption for government sponsored events; municipal celebrations; county fairs; private gatherings such as weddings, funerals, graduations, reunions; garage sales, auctions, farmer's markets, church, and fraternal events, and existing speedways.

Angie Lipelt, Environmental Services Director, reviewed the proposed modifications to the Zoning Ordinance to adopt Article IX noting that the Planning Commission has approved these modifications and recommended approval to the County Board.

The Chair asked for public input. No one spoke for or against amending the Zoning Ordinance to adopt Article IX Large/Special events.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 10:12 a.m. regarding amending the Zoning Ordinance to adopt Article IX.

The County Board reconvened its regular session at 10:13 a.m.

Date: September 23, 2025

Res. #47-25

**RESOLUTION APPROVING TAX ABATEMENT
FOR CERTAIN PROPERTY PURSUANT TO MINN. STAT. 469.1813**

On motion of Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held September 23, 2025 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 469.1813 gives authority to the County of Mower to grant an abatement of property taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the statutory requirements, Mower County has adopted the Tax Abatement Policy for new construction of Single and Multi-family homes which includes criteria which must be met before an abatement of taxes will be granted; and

WHEREAS, Melinda Lenhart is the owner(s) of certain property within Mower County, legally described as follows:

11.25 AC Bldg Site along E line E1/2 SE1/4; SEE DOC#665940-941 Section 14 Bennington Twp, Mower County, MN (PIN 03.014.0030)

WHEREAS, Melinda Lenhart has made application to Mower County for the abatement of taxes as to the above-described parcel; and

WHEREAS, Notice having been duly given, a public hearing was held on September 23, 2025 before the Mower County Board of Commissioners, on said application.

WHEREAS, Melinda Lenhart has met the statutory requirements outlined under Minnesota Statute 469.1813 Subdivision 1(1) and Subdivision 2(i) as well as Mower County's criteria for tax abatement;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF MOWER COUNTY, MINNESOTA:

1. Mower County does, hereby grant an abatement of Mower County's share of real estate taxes upon the above-described parcel for the construction of the shouse.
2. The tax abatement will be for no more than five years commencing, in the tax year the property realizes a value increase over original value due to construction of the housing project. Partially constructed housing may result in an abatement in the first abatement year that may be significantly less than the following years. This will still be considered one of the five years of eligible abatement. In the event construction has not commenced within one year of approval, the abatement is eliminated and the property owner will need to reapply in accordance with this policy.
3. The County shall provide the awarded abatement payment following payment of due real estate taxes annually. One single payment shall be made to the owner of record at the time of the payment, by December 30th of that calendar year.
4. The real estate taxes to be abated shall be for up to the full amount of the real estate taxes collected due to the added tax base of the newly constructed housing/home annually. The current value of the property is not eligible for the abatement, will not be abated as part of this program and is further defined as the "original value." Any eligible abatement years are calculated on the tax increase due to a value increase over the original value.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of September, 2025.

Date:

Ord. #04-25

ORDINANCE
Cannabis Ordinance to Regulate Businesses
Amendment

On motion of Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, the following Ordinance was unanimously passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held September 23, 2025 at the Mower County Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, a Notice of Intention to hold a public hearing to consider amending Sections of the Mower County Cannabis Ordinance To Regulate Businesses was published in Mower County's official newspaper, the *Austin Daily Herald*, 8/13/25 and in the Mower County Independent on 8/14/25; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on said amendment on 9/2/2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Mower County Government Center, Board Room, before the

Mower County Planning Commission at which any concerned citizen was given an opportunity to speak on the matter; and

WHEREAS, the Mower County Planning Commission recommended by a majority vote to revise sections of the Mower County Cannabis Ordinance To Regulate Businesses; and

WHEREAS, Notice having been duly given, a public hearing was to be held on September 9, 2025 at which time this matter was tabled to September 23, 2025 and the public hearing was subsequent held, before the Mower County Board of Commissioners at which any concerned citizen was given an opportunity to speak on the matter; and

WHEREAS, No one spoke in favor or opposed to the proposed changes;

BE IT ORDAINED those revisions incorporating all previously approved amendments, and including minor corrections, of the Mower County Cannabis Ordinance To Regulate Businesses and amended henceforth, shall be incorporated and adopted in their entirety; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the following Section(s) be amended of the Mower County Cannabis Ordinance To Regulate Businesses

Section 1.5 Definitions, Section 2 Registration of Cannabis Businesses, and Section 4 Temporary Cannabis Events were amended to clarify the jurisdiction of Mower County on Cannabis Retail Registrations, the timing of Mower County's issuance of those registrations, and the requirements for Cannabis Events as it relates to the Special Event Ordinance;

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that Ordinance #04-25 shall be effective upon publication in the Legal Newspaper of Mower County, the "Austin Daily Herald."

A copy of the entire Mower County Cannabis Ordinance is on file in the Mower County Environmental Services Office, at the Mower County Auditor-Treasurer office, and online at the Mower County website.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of September 2025.

Date:

Ord. #05-25

ORDINANCE
Zoning Ordinance Amendment
Adopt Article IX Special Event Ordinance

On motion of Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reianrtz, the following Ordinance was unanimously passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held September 23, 2025 at the Mower County Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, a Notice of Intention to hold a public hearing to consider amending the Mower County Zoning Ordinance to include a Special Event Ordinance Section was published in Mower County's official newspaper, the *Austin Daily Herald*, 8/13/25 and in the Mower County Independent on 8/14/25; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on said amendment on 9/2/2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Mower County Government Center, Board Room, before the Mower County Planning Commission at which any concerned citizen was given an opportunity to speak on the matter; and

WHEREAS, the Mower County Planning Commission recommended by a majority vote to revise sections of the Mower County Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, Notice having been duly given, a public hearing was to be held on September 9, 2025 at which time this matter was tabled to September 23, 2025 and the public hearing was subsequent held, before the Mower County Board of Commissioners at which any concerned citizen was given an opportunity to speak on the matter; and

WHEREAS, No one spoke in favor or opposed to the proposed change;

BE IT ORDAINED to adopt Article IX Special Event Ordinance as part to the Mower County Zoning Ordinance; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that Ordinance #05-25 shall be effective upon publication in the Legal Newspaper of Mower County, the "Austin Daily Herald." (September 27, 2025)

A copy of the entire Mower County Zoning Ordinance is on file in the Mower County Public Works Office, at the Mower County Auditor-Treasurer office, and online at the Mower County website.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of September 2025.

Motion made by Commissioner Mueller, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the Health & Human Services accounts payable totaling \$355,248.27. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the following Commissioner warrants for payment:

<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc.	42,092.98	Midwest Monitoring & Surveillance	6,240.54
AMI Imaging Systems Inc	9,302.50	Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative	16,484.54
Brightly Software, Inc.	14,962.78	Minnesota Dept Of Agriculture	2,391.00
CDW Government	3,311.81	MN Department Of Corrections	29,100.00
Cedar Valley Services, Inc	70,722.22	Oldcastle Infrastructure	3,033.76
Consolidated Correctional Foodservice	20,607.04	Rohl Electric and Services LLC	2,618.62
Diamond Drugs, Inc.	5,523.28	Sheriff Houston County	8,804.17
Erickson Engineering Co., LLC	23,405.50	Sir Lines-A-Lot, LLC	95,571.00
G & G Heating And Air Conditioning	3,100.00	Syverson Truck Center/Dave	2,020.84
Heartland Girls Ranch	11,139.23	Trimble's Cycle Center, Inc	4,635.82
K & K Fabrication, Inc	3,597.74	Ziegler, Inc	6,340.52
Klein McCarthy Architects	5,093.20	ZOHO Corporation	9,339.00

KnowBe4, Inc.

4,183.66

62

Payments less than 2000

36,882.86

Final Total: 440,504.61

Motion carried unanimously.

Date: September 23, 2025

Res. #48-25

RESOLUTION

On motion of Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held September 23, 2025 at the Government Center, Austin, Minnesota.

BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Minnesota Stat. Sec. 161.36, the Commissioner of Transportation be appointed as Agent of Mower County to accept as its agent, federal aid funds which may be made available for eligible transportation related projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Chairperson Polly Glynn and the County Administrator Matthew Verdick are hereby authorized and directed for and on behalf of Mower County to execute and enter into an agreement with the Commissioner of Transportation prescribing the terms and conditions of said federal aid participation as set forth and contained in "Minnesota Department of Transportation MnDOT Contract Number1059824", a copy of which said agreement was before the County Board and which is made a part hereof by reference.

Passed and approved this 23rd day of September, 2025.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Mueller, to approve the Joint Powers Agreement Region One – Southeast Minnesota Homeland Security Emergency Management. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Reinartz, seconded by Commissioner Sparks, to approve the Joint Powers Agreement with the State of Minnesota Emergency Communication Networks division for Public Safety Answering Point ("PSAP") reimbursement related to 911 Network Circuit Upgrade (Swift Contract #275908 effective 9/9/26 – 11/30/26). Motion carried unanimously.

Under Committee Reports Commissioner Ankeny reported attending an Administration meeting on 9/11 and a Personnel meeting on 9/18. Commissioner Reinartz reported attending the Collaborative group meeting on 9/16 and a Senior Center Board meeting as well as the HHS Committee meeting on 9/18. Commissioner Sparks reported attending the Workforce Development open house on 9/17, a Personnel meeting on 9/18 and the MN Rural Energy Board on 9/22. Commissioner Mueller reported attending a Finance Committee on 9/9 and the Township Assoc. meeting on 9/18. Commissioner Glynn reported attending Finance Committee on 9/9, SWCD as well as Safety Committee on 9/11, Wellness Committee as well as a Welcome Week activity "voice" on 9/16 and the Township Assoc. meeting on 9/18.

COMMISSIONERS' RECORD MOWER COUNTY, MINNESOTA

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for 10/7/2025 at 1:00 p.m.

THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY:  Chairperson

Attest:
By: 
Clerk/Administrator