

REGULAR SESSION OF THE MOWER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 24, 2026

The Mower County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Mower, Minnesota, met in Regular Session February 24, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center in Austin, Minnesota.

All members present, viz: Chair Dan Sparks, Vice-Chair Mike Ankeny, Jerry Reinartz, John Mueller (remote) and Polly Glynn. Also in attendance were County Administrator/Clerk Matthew Verdick and Assistant County Attorney Megan Burroughs.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve the agenda ADD to discuss cancel or reschedule the July work session. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

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

1. Approve Minutes of February 10, 2026
2. Acknowledge the Receipt of Electronic Fund Transfer Payment Reports
3. Approve the following position Grade Changes recommended by Flaherty and Hood effective February 22, 2026; the Administrative Service Coordinator will be effective upon filling; the Chief Administrative Officer is retroactively effective to January 13, 2026, the date the Board adopted the new organizational chart:

Position	Current Grade	Recommended Grade	Position	Current Grade	Recommended Grade
Child Support Officer	B23	B24	Lead Child Support Officer	B24	B25
Child Support Supervisor	C41	C43	Fiscal Services Supervisor	C41	C51
Administrative Services Coordinator	New	C44	Chief Administrative Officer	New	E81

The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

The Board recessed at 9:06 a.m. for the purpose of a public hearing.

The Chair called the Public Hearing to order at 9:06 a.m. regarding a Housing Tax Abatement application of Todd Weisinger for a single-family home located at S½ SW¼, EXC W940.5FT, & EXC TRI PC ON W SIDE Section 13 Windom Twp (PIN 20.013.0010)

County Administrator Matthew Verdick reviewed the application and recommended approval.

The Applicant was not present. No one spoke for or against the Weisinger housing tax abatement application.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 9:08 a.m. regarding the Weisinger housing tax abatement application.

The County Board reconvened its regular session at 9:08 a.m.

Date: February 24, 2026

Res. #17-26

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

On motion of Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, the following Resolution was passed and adopted by the Mower County Board of Commissioners at a meeting held February 24, 2026 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, Todd Weisinger is the owner(s) of certain property within Mower County, legally described as follows:

S½ SW¼, EXC W940.5FT, & EXC TRI PC ON W SIDE Section 13 Windom Twp (PIN 20.013.0010)

WHEREAS, Todd Weisinger 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 February 24, 2026 before the Mower County Board of Commissioners, on said application.

WHEREAS, Todd Weisinger 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 single-family home.
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 24th day of February, 2026. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

JC Hormel Nature Center Director Luke Reese and educator Kelly Ball presented a request to the Board for support and a fund match for their upcoming three-year Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant application, which aims to expand regional environmental education programs that have grown significantly since their first grant in 2019. They highlighted increased participation from surrounding districts, the strength of their curriculum, transportation assistance, and the success of earlier grant cycles. Finance Committee reviewed the request and recommends approval noting the program's regional impact and alignment with water-quality funds.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to authorize a letter of support as well as financial support at a 20% match for the JC Hormel Nature Center application for the 2027-2030 Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) for the Outreach Environmental Education Program. The commitment of a 20% match over the grant cycle is as follows:

Year	Total	LCCMR (80%)	Match (20%)
2027	\$76,272.05	\$61,017.64	\$15,254.41
2028	\$162,569.63	\$130,055.70	\$32,513.93
2029	\$168,932.49	\$135,145.99	\$33,786.50
2030	\$87,750.08	\$70,200.06	\$17,550.02
Total	\$495,524.23	\$396,419.39	\$99,104.85

The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Fiscal Services Supervisor Trisha Blaser presented Health & Human Services accounts payable for approval.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn , seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to approve the Health & Human Services accounts payable totaling \$205,767.29. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

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

<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Apex Equipment LLC	3,397.90	MN Department Of Corrections	29,295.00
Baudoin Oil Company	20,561.82	Nexus-Mille Lacs Family Healing	18,272.64
Busch Systems Intl. Inc	3,230.91	North Risk Partners LLC	4,166.63
Cedar Valley Services, Inc	67,466.11	Petrolend Corp.	6,319.79
Consolidated Correctional Foodservice	21,562.14	Ratwik, Roszak & Maloney, P.A.	4,357.90
Falkstone LLC	35,396.27	Rohl Electric and Services LLC	4,818.18
FRSecure LLC	12,231.25	Ronco Engineering Sales, Inc	2,990.27
Heartland Girls Ranch	13,016.90	SE Minnesota EMS	4,216.88
Jones Haugh & Smith Inc	4,231.00	Sheriff Houston County	7,604.17
Little Falls Machine, Inc.	2,555.53	Syverson Truck Center/Dave	2,510.10
Midwest Monitoring & Surveillance	3,591.36	Village Ranch Inc	8,422.39
Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative	8,872.72	Ziegler, Inc	4,520.44
Minnesota County Attorneys Association	7,133.00	52 payments less than 2000	29,341.17
		Final Total:	330,082.47

The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

County Engineer Mitch Wenum presented bid information received for projects: 1) Replacing Bridge L4980 with new Bridge 50K92 in Marshall Township (SAP 050-599-181); 2) Replace Bridge 50J03 with new Bridge 50L02 in Pleasant Valley Township (SAP 050-599-185); 3) Replace Bridge L5013 with new Bridge 50L06 in Lyle Township (SAP 050-599-187); and 4) bituminous surfacing on CR 57 between CSAH 16 and CSAH 20, CSAH 16 from CSAH 2 to CR 57, CSAH 15 from CSAH 10 to CSAH 8, and CSAH 3 between TH 218 and CSAH 7 (CP 50-26-01, SAP 050-616-035, SAP 050-615-008 & SAP 050-603-022).

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Glynn, to award the \$209,634.36 low bidder of Alcon Excavating for the Bridge L4980 replacement project with new Bridge 50K92 in Marshall Township (SAP 050-599-181) and have the project commence. Full bid abstract on file in the office of the County Auditor-Treasurer and at Public Works. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to award the \$131,274.00 low bidder of Midwest Contracting for the Bridge 50J03 replacement project with new Bridge 50L02 in Pleasant Valley Township (SAP 050-599-185) and have the project commence. Full bid abstract on file in the office of the County Auditor-Treasurer and at Public Works. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Ankeny, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to award the \$410,840.02 low bidder of Alcon Excavating for the Bridge L5013 replacement project with new Bridge 50L06 in Lyle Township (SAP 050-599-187) and have the project commence. Full bid abstract on file in the office of the County Auditor-Treasurer and at Public Works. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to award the \$7,795,119.34 low bidder of Ulland Brothers for the bituminous surfacing projects on CR 57 between CSAH 16 and CSAH 20 (CP 50-26-01), CSAH 16 from CSAH 2 to CR 57 (SAP 060-616-035), CSAH 15 from CSAH 10 to CSAH 8 (SAP 050-615-008), and CSAH 3 between TH 218 and CSAH 7 (SAP 050-603-022) and have the projects commence. Full bid abstract on file in the office of the County Auditor-Treasurer and at Public Works. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Facilities Director Peyton Reese presented for approval amendments to Personnel Policy F140 Small Appliance Usage Policy.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to table amending Personnel Policy F140 Small Appliance Usage Policy for legal review and finalization. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to amend the contract with Klein McCarthy Architects to include services for updating the Adam's Shop. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to amend the contract with Contegrity Group to include services for updating the Adam's Shop. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to amend the contract with Klein McCarthy Architects to include services for the Government Center first floor remodel. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to amend the contract with Contegrity Group to include services for the Government Center first floor remodel. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to approve hiring two FTE custodians for facilities. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

The Board discussed whether to pursue or waive a shotgun-only ordinance for deer hunting in light of the 2026 statewide repeal that will make rifles permissible by default. Staff summarized mixed public input from a January listening session, reviewed ballistic and incident data, and noted that some neighboring counties are allowing rifles and some have not yet decided. Administration recommended taking no action, which would default Mower County to state rifle allowances while still permitting landowners to restrict hunting methods on their own property. Board members discussed safety, hunter education requirements, landscape considerations, comparisons to other states, and the option to revisit an ordinance in future years if local issues arise.

Chair Dan Sparks passed the gavel to Vice Chair Mike Ankeny.

Motion made by Commissioner Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Reinartz, to take no action on the state's rifle legislation that repealed shotgun only zones. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye; Commissioner Ankeny aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Vice-Chair Mike Ankeny returned the gavel to the Chair Dan Sparks.

The Board discussed the requests to possibly cancel or reschedule the July 7 work session and the August 4 work session.

Motion made by Commissioner Glynn, seconded by Commissioner Ankeny, to cancel the July 7 work session and to reschedule the August 4 Work Session from 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. The Commissioners voted as follows: Commissioner Ankeny aye; Commissioner Reinartz aye; Commissioner Mueller aye; Commissioner Glynn aye; Commissioner Sparks aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Under Committee Reports Commissioner Mueller reported that he attended County Board meeting on 2/10, Building Committee on 2/11, Finance Committee on 2/13 and the Joint City/County meeting on 2/18 as a substitute attendee. Commissioner Ankeny reported he attended Personnel Committee on 2/6, Building Committee on 2/11 and 2/23 and the Joint City/County meeting on 2/18. Commissioner Reinartz reported he attended the Senior Center meeting on 2/19 and that the Community Health Services Advisory Committee was dissolved effective 2/10. Commissioner Glynn reported that she attended Personnel Committee on 2/6, the SWCD annual meeting on 2/18; Wellness Committee on 2/19 and the Root River Watershed One Plan meeting on 2/23. Commissioner Sparks reported he attended Finance Committee on 2/13.

Deanne Jeanne Ryther appeared before the Board as a walk-in to introduce herself as the Mower County GOP delegate and indicate her goals in her new position. The Board affirmed to Ms. Ryther that their elected positions are non-partisan.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:46 a.m. The next meeting is a work session scheduled for March 3, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

THE MOWER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: DAN SPARKS
Chairperson

Attest:
By: [Signature]
Clerk/Administrator