

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2025 – 10:00 A.M.**

Pursuant to adjournment, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners met in the Pennington County Justice Center Board Room in Thief River Falls, MN, on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Members present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: None.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sourdif and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Chairman asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, there was a motion by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the County Board minutes of September 9, 2025, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$268,104.24 and the following Commissioner warrants, to include a warrant to LETS LLC for \$175.00 for new Deputy Sheriff training. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$92,156.75
Road & Bridge	\$22,264.70
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 270.00
Ditch Funds	\$ 2,035.50

Meals and per diems in the amount of \$23.01 were also approved.

Janelle Cheney – DOC District Supervisor

Ms. Cheney presented a handout and discussed Community Supervision Funding for 2026. The State's funding formula has changed and the County will be responsible for \$57,874.91 for FY 2026. Ms. Cheney apologized for the late notice of such change in consideration of budgeting timelines. She stated that the local DOC office is being mindful of costs and have not filled two local office vacancies as a result. The Board thanked her for the report and for the department's work in keeping county costs down.

Larissa Fitzgerald – Pennington County SWCD District Technician

Ms. Fitzgerald presented a wetland delineation for the TRF Regional Airport as it pertains to the future runway expansion project. Some of the property was delineated in 2020 and she is requesting Board approval of this delineation contingent on receipt of an

updated delineation map from SEH. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the wetland delineation for the TRF Regional Airport as presented, contingent upon receipt of an updated delineation map from SEH. Motion carried with Commissioner Nelson abstaining.

Mike Flaagan – County Engineer

Mr. Flaagan recently met with the FAA, SEH, and Joe Hedrick of the TRF Airport to discuss the runway expansion project and resulting road move. An MOU between Pennington County and the TRF Regional Airport Authority will need to be created. Funding will be through the FAA, but the County is the road authority and the new road will have to meet certifications.

Engineer Flaagan noted that the county's contract with RJ Zavoral & Sons, Inc. for projects CP 57-25-08, SAP 057-627-013, SAP 057-628-005, and SAP 057-631-008, is complete and he is requesting final payment, noting a total cost of \$2,551,703.55. The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

### **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Contract No. 2501 has in all things been completed and the County Board being fully advised in the premises,

**NOW THEN, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we do hereby accept said completed project for and on behalf of the Pennington County Highway Dept. and authorize final payment as specified herein.

Engineer Flaagan informed the Board that Boyer Trucks sold the two trucks that the Highway Department was interested in leasing.

Julie Sjostrand – Human Services Director

Ms. Sjostrand presented the consent agenda of the September 16, 2025, Human Service Committee meeting. On a motion by Commissioner Sorenson and seconded by Commissioner Nelson, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for September 16, 2025, (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted.

### **SECTION A**

- I. To approve August 19, 2025, Human Service Committee Meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the agency's personnel action as presented.
- III. A. To approve the CY 2026 Pennington County Family Services/Children's Mental Health Collaborative Supportive Services Agreement with Alluma, Inc. as presented.

- B. To approve the Emergency Rental Assistance for \$9,000.00 from the Statewide Affordable Housing Aid, as presented.
- C. To approve the Northwest Minnesota Multi-County Housing Redevelopment Authority acceptance of the third payment of 2024 Pennington County aid for \$10,000.00 as presented.
- D. To approve the purchase and installation of 4 Auto Starts from Azure AutoStart's as presented.

SECTION B

- I. To approve payment of the Agency's bills.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Ms. Herzberg discussed the proposed levy for 2026 and the breakdown between the various funds, noting that additional cuts have brought the levy down to 3.8%. She noted that the levy is reduced by County Program Aid, which has been reduced for 2026.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the following resolution, the proposed 2026 levy of 3.8%, and the County budget as written. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners have reviewed the 2026 budgets submitted by the various departments; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed levies have been reduced by the amount to be received from the State of Minnesota for the following: County Program Aid - \$1,035,615 (estimated).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the proposed budgets for 2026 are approved and that the following proposed levies be adopted:

	Levy Before CPA	CPA*	Net Levy After CPA
Revenue	\$8,870,384	\$689,719	\$8,180,665
Road and Bridge	\$2,018,390	\$156,378	\$1,862,012
Welfare	\$2,243,260	\$189,518	\$2,248,742
G.O. Jail Bond	\$757,687	0	\$757,687
G.O. Justice Center CIP Bond	\$379,575	0	\$379,575

\*County Program Aid

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to change the date/time of the December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, County Board meeting to December 16, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to change the date of the December 23, 2025, County Board meeting to December 30, 2025. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to schedule a Truth in Taxation meeting for December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Justice Center Board Room. Motion carried.

Ms. Herzberg reminded the Board of the City/County/School meeting being held on October 20, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Imperial Room of the Ralph Engelstad Arena.

#### County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve renewal of the current Pennington County/MHC health insurance plans for 2026 with an average increase of 9.9%. Motion carried.

#### County Attorney Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to accept a Norwegian troll statue donation from retiring attorney Mike Jorgenson and to issue a thank you letter on behalf of the County Board. Motion carried.

#### Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioners that attended the 2025 AMC Fall Policy Conference provided the following reports: Commissioner Peterson stated the conference went well and he noted that our county levy was at the low end for this region. Commissioner Sourdif stated that General Government meetings focused on cannabis and related regulations. Commissioner Nelson stated that Health & Human Services discussion focused on mental health, cuts to the SNAP program, and other areas that may affect the counties. Commissioner Lawrence reported on Public Safety and noted extensive discussion on PERA retirement differences between Dispatcher and Corrections Officer, also with salaries for these positions.

The Board held further discussion on PERA pension plans with the County Coordinator explaining differences between the Coordinated, Correctional, and Police & Fire plans in regard to vesting, retirement ages, etc. He noted that Pennington County employs Dispatcher/Jailers that already belong to the Correctional Plan.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to October 14, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator

Roy Sourdif, Chairman

Pennington County

Board of Commissioners