

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM  
FEBRUARY 10, 2026 – 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, February 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Roy Sourdif, Dave Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: Bruce Lawrence.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sorenson, 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 Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the County Board minutes of January 27, 2026, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the Auditor-Manual warrants for January 2026 totaling \$2,899,617.72 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$150,460.02
Road & Bridge	\$ 59,932.21
Solid Waste	\$ 18,441.57
Ditch Funds	\$ 9,397.50

Meal reimbursements and per diems in the amount of \$1,592.79 were also approved.

**Julie Sjostrand – Human Services Director**

Ms. Sjostrand met with the Board and read aloud a letter of retirement and resignation from her position as Human Services Director effective June 5, 2026. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to accept a letter of resignation and retirement notice from Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand effective June 5, 2026, and to thank her for her years of service to the County. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to authorize the Personnel Committee to advertise for the position of Human Services Director. Motion carried.

**Bryanna Greffthen – Pennington County SWCD**

Ms. Greffthen presented the 2025 County Feedlot Officer Report. She noted a total of 28 registered feedlots with five inspected during the year. One site was non-compliant due to water quality discharge standards and she is working with that individual and feedlot to

bring them into compliance. Priority inspection areas for 2025 included feedlots within the Red Lake River 1W1P, one in shoreland area, and one that had never been inspected. She also discussed owner assistance and outreach, which included social media advertising and newsletters. Ms. Grefthen completed 28 hours of training for the year and noted that 20.5 performance credits were earned. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to accept the 2025 County Feedlot Officer Report as presented and authorize the Chairman to sign. Motion carried. The Board commended Ms. Grefthen for her work as feedlot officer in 2025.

### **Anthony Mapes – Veteran’s Service Officer**

Mr. Mapes presented an update and overview of his office and service provided to area veterans. He noted completion of all required training of a Veteran’s Service Officer. He continues to work with the local American Legion, VFW, and other local groups to spread the word about VSO services and benefits available to veterans. He is currently researching a Veteran Appreciation lunch or dinner. Mr. Mapes explained that a VSO helps assist veteran medical care, community care, provides counseling, and assists with claims and determinations for benefits related to service-connected disabilities. He noted that these are federal dollars that come back into the community. Mr. Mapes thanked the Board for his expanded office space and the better waiting area for veterans. Commissioner Nelson expressed his thanks to Mr. Mapes for his work and asked about the status of volunteers to assist with veteran care and/or transports. Mr. Mapes noted there is a shortage of volunteers, and anyone interested is encouraged to call or stop by his office.

### **Mike Flaagan – County Engineer**

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to authorize the County Engineer to advertise for fuel, equipment rental, and culvert bids for 2026, and to set a bid opening date/time of March 24, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to authorize the County Engineer to advertise for 2026 construction projects, including SAP 57-611-02 (former County Road #62), SAP 57-592-001 (township road with CSAH #11 project), SAP 57-629-008 (Goodridge school road), and SAP 57-630-004 (CSAH #30 / 6<sup>th</sup> St. project). Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan informed the Board that the Township Association scheduled their annual meeting for April 14, 2026, in the Joint Use Facility conference room.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to authorize the County Engineer to sell one Highway Department plow truck (Unit 310) utilizing Purple Wave auction services at no cost to the county. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan discussed towers located within the county that are able to be sold, noting he would like to hold a meeting with the County Sheriff to discuss the tower formerly used

by the Sheriff's office, now utilized by the dispatch office. Mr. Flaagan was asked to set up such a meeting to include the Sheriff, the Engineer, Commissioner Lawrence and Commissioner Peterson.

Engineer Flaagan and Highway Foreman Joe Garry presented quotes received for the purchase of a new tractor, noting prices include a 2-year/2000-hour warranty and trade in of a 2014 Case Puma tractor.

Titan Machinery / Case tractors = 2026 model, 165 horsepower, \$171,758.60;  
2024 model, 185 horsepower, \$169,500.

Ziegler CAT / Massey-Ferguson tractors = 2024 model, 155 horsepower,  
\$142,500; 2024 model 190 horsepower, \$171,000.

Mr. Flaagan recommended the quote by Ziegler CAT for a 2024 Massey-Ferguson tractor with 190-horsepower. Mr. Garry noted that the quote also includes free oil changes for the first 2000 hours. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the quote from Ziegler CAT in the amount of \$171,000 for the purchase of a 2024 Massey-Ferguson 190 horsepower tractor, to include trade-in of a 2014 Case Puma. Motion carried.

Mr. Garry informed the Board that the two new, leased Cat motor graders should arrive in March of this year.

Engineer Flaagan stated he contacted Northland Community and Technical College about a civil technician program and hopes to meet with them in a few weeks along with other highway engineers and MnDOT. Mr. Flaagan noted this could be a one or two-year program and currently none are offered in Northwest MN.

### **John Burkel – House Representative, District 1A**

Mr. Burkel discussed the culture of the MN House now that the seats are tied. The legislature did the best they could considering the cuts. Mr. Burkel discussed the current fraud situation in MN and what areas are affected, including how human services programs may see effects while investigations continue. He noted a \$1 billion cut to human services in 2025 and stated that the antiquated human service computer program will be updated incrementally over time. Bonding will be the main focus for the upcoming legislative session, and he personally hopes to get an update on the TRF Regional Airport bonding needs. Commissioner Peterson noted that bonding was discussed at the last MN Rural Counties meeting and it appears to be a bi-partisan conversation. Commissioner Peterson discussed upcoming local airport projects and requested a future conversation with Mr. Burkel on the issue. Discussion was also held on aging area infrastructure systems and the agriculture budget. He is working in committee for MPCA permit reforms so it's more streamlined. Engineer Flaagan discussed engineer requests for such streamlining but said the State requires notices and permits earlier every year. He also noted local importance of the Local Road

Improvement Program and bridge bonding. The Board thanked Mr. Burkel for attending the meeting and hearing the county's concerns.

**County Auditor-Treasurer Items:** None.

**County Coordinator Items:**

Mr. Erickson informed the Board that Travis Easley accepted the position of Lead Maintenance Worker and has successfully completed a background check. He is expected to begin his position on February 17, 2026.

**County Attorney Items:** None.

**Committee Reports/Commissioner Updates:** None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to adjourn the Board meeting to February 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator  
Pennington County

David Sorenson, Chairman  
Board of Commissioners