

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
8:30 AM, TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025
Meeting Room A / B – 3rd Floor – Courthouse
MINUTES

The Clay County Board of Commissioners met in regular session with the following Commissioners present: Paul Krabbenhoft, Ezra Baer, Jenny Mongeau, Kevin Campbell, and David Ebinger. Others present: County Administrator Stephen Larson, County Attorney Brian Melton, Assistant County Administrator Darren Brooke, and Senior Administrative Assistant Sarah Hellem.

Call to Order

Commissioner Campbell called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

On motion by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit - Clay County Ducks Unlimited - Bingo/Raffle

By consent, the Board approved the Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for Clay County Ducks Unlimited.

Citizens to be Heard

There were no citizens to be heard.

Approval of Payment of Bills and Vouchers

On motion by Commissioner Baer, seconded by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the bills and vouchers totaling \$1,722,292 from 128 vendors. There were 92 warrants issued under \$2,000 (\$41,596) and the following 36 were over \$2,000.

RDO Equipment Co.	\$ 1,029,407	Solutions Behavioral Health PC	\$ 5,416
Otter Tail Public Health	\$ 233,744	Minnkota EnviroServices, Inc.	\$ 5,091
Gehrtz Construction Services, Inc	\$ 150,450	General Equipment & Supplies Inc.	\$ 4,980
Turner Sand & Gravel Inc.	\$ 55,953	Code 4 Services, Inc	\$ 4,930
Lutheran Social Service Of Mn	\$ 23,334	North American Benefits Company	\$ 4,892
Becker County Public Health	\$ 18,829	Benson Psychological Services, PC	\$ 4,500
CB & Sons Electric, Inc.	\$ 14,272	The Retrofit Companies Inc.	\$ 4,495
Uline	\$ 11,529	Northern Improvement Co	\$ 3,959
Wilkin Co Public Health	\$ 10,957	Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.	\$ 3,796
State of MN Health Care Savings Plan	\$ 9,749	Madison National Life	\$ 3,755
Pemberton Law, P.L.L.P.	\$ 8,532	Clay County Public Health Dept (Jail)	\$ 3,096
Mickelson Body Shop, Inc.	\$ 8,001	Thomson Reuters - West 590031	\$ 2,861
MN Department of Transportation	\$ 7,957	Lakes Area Jetting, LLC	\$ 2,775
Verizon-386550144	\$ 7,617	Johnson Feed, Inc.	\$ 2,771
Delta Dental	\$ 7,517	Nancy Hein-Kolo, P.C.	\$ 2,500
CircleUp Education	\$ 5,745	Coborn's Inc	\$ 2,167
NDSCS-Division for Workforce Affairs	\$ 5,526	Razor Tracking Inc.	\$ 2,151
Clay Co Public Health	\$ 5,428	Jason Allen Anderson	\$ 2,000

Approval of Minutes from August 12, 2025

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Baer, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes from August 12, 2025.

Request Approval to Fill Assistant County Attorney Position

County Attorney Brian Melton requested approval to fill an Assistant County Attorney position due to an upcoming resignation, effective September 1, 2025.

On motion by Commissioner Baer, seconded by Commissioner Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to fill the Assistant County Attorney position.

Request Approval to Adopt Artificial Intelligence Policy

GIS & Communications Director Mark Sloan and Technology Services Director Rory Schmitz requested approval to adopt the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy and stated the rapid growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and risks for county operations. AI can improve efficiency, support decision-making, and enhance public services; however, without clear guidance, its use may expose the County to legal, ethical, and operational risks. Establishing an Artificial Intelligence Policy ensures that employees, contractors, and partners use AI responsibly and in alignment with the County's commitment to data privacy, transparency, and public trust.

The purpose of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy is to guide employees in using AI appropriately, securely, and in compliance with data privacy and retention laws. AI can support staff by summarizing reports, drafting routine correspondence, analyzing data trends, and automating routine tasks.

This policy will provide clear expectations for the appropriate use of AI in employees' work duties, outlining safeguards to protect sensitive data and ensuring compliance with state and federal data privacy and retention laws. By adopting a standardized framework, Clay County can prevent misuse, reduce liability, and ensure that AI-generated content and insights are accurate, secure, and ethically applied.

Commissioner Ebinger stated this came before the Personnel Issues Committee (PIC) and was recommended to come before the full Board.

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to adopt the Artificial Intelligence Policy as presented.

Request Approval to Purchase TCP Scheduling Software for the Withdrawal Management/Detox Facility

Director Troy Amundsen requested approval to purchase scheduling software for the Withdrawal Management/Detox Facility and stated Detox currently schedules all 24/7 employees manually, which requires a considerable amount of time. This software would reduce the time spent on scheduling and would allow staff to access their schedule and allow the ability to request vacation, sick leave, shift changes etc. into this system. This system will allow management to monitor overtime and track variable hour employees.

Commissioner Mongeau asked if there were any savings since the Correctional Facility is currently using the same software. Mr. Amundsen stated unfortunately not, but if this expands to more departments, that is something that can be revisited.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of users for the software, adding users, and what fully staffed would look like.

On motion by Commissioner Mongeau, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the purchase and implement the TCP Scheduling Software for the Withdrawal Management/Detox Facility.

Budget Presentation - Social Services

Social Services Director Quinn Jaeger presented the Social Services budget for 2026, and first gave an overview of 2024, including expenditures over revenues, salaries, administrative expenses, Out-of-Home Placement trends, civil commitment related services, and 2024's largest impacts. The 2026 budget includes the new request of a Disability Case Manager, salaries, administrative expenditures, Detox, Out-of-Home Placement, County Burials, MN Sex Offender Program (MOSP), and other key budget drivers including contracted providers, revenue decreases, program expenditure adjustments, and revenue increases.

Discussion ensued regarding County burials, the current fund balance, and expenditures over revenues.

Budget Presentation - Solid Waste

Solid Waste Manager Corey Bang presented the Solid Waste budget for 2026. Solid Waste has a Capital Budget and an Operations Budget. Mr. Bang discussed the Capital Budget including special assessment, internal service fee.

The operating budget is broken down by solid waste, composting, recycling, public education, household hazardous waste, existing landfill, and the Resource Recovery Center (RRC), and Mr. Bang discussed salaries, benefits, shipped material, landfill fees, tipping fees, training, equipment repair & maintenance, miscellaneous – MN landfill surcharge – Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste, gas, snow removal & mowing, fuel lubrication, new request of insulating the RRC garage, internal service, and the increases due to the City of Moorhead terminating the contract.

Discussion ensued regarding SCORE funding, the composting recycling program implementation, tipping fees, and the new equipment that needs to be purchased.

Further discussion ensued regarding the RRC contract with the City of Moorhead.

BREAK

The Board took a break from 10:02 a.m. to 10:10 a.m.

Discussion and Approval of the 2026 Insurance Broker Partnership

HR Director Anna Moore requested approval of the 2026 Insurance Broker partnership and stated Clay County currently has a contract with National Insurance Services (NIS) through 2026. Due to dissatisfaction with the service being provided, HR started researching other broker services, and decided to move forward with Choice Insurance, out of Fargo, ND. At the

time of exploring other options, HR was unaware that a contract was in place through 2026 with NIS. It's suggested to fulfill the financial obligation to NIS and buy out the contract for 2026, in the amount of approximately \$48,000 and switch brokers. This was brought to the Insurance Committee who unanimously recommended the change in brokers.

Commissioner Campbell asked for a comparison of commission rates between the two brokers. Ms. Moore stated NIS charges \$6.26 per member per month for health insurance and \$1.00 for dental. Choice would be charging \$6.00 per member per month for health insurance and \$1.00 for dental. Commissioner Campbell asked how many members Clay County has. Ms. Moore stated as of Monday, August 25, 2025, Clay County has 514 contracts.

Commissioner Baer asked if this was a 1-year contract. Ms. Moore stated we haven't seen a contract yet, but that is something that can be negotiated.

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to hire Choice Insurance as Clay County's insurance broker effective 1/1/2026.

Request Approval for the 2026 Health Insurance Renewal

Ms. Moore requested approval for the 2026 health insurance renewal and stated the County is coming off a 4-year contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) that offered rate caps. This summer HR put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) and received multiple proposals. The best offers received were from BCBS Minnesota, Medica, Health Partners, Sanford, and United Healthcare. The Insurance Committee is making a recommendation to switch to Medica insurance for 2026 and 2027. Medica came in with a proposal of a -12% increase for 2026 with a 15% cap for 2027. This would be an annual premium savings of \$783,000 which is 50/50% split between Clay County and the employee. With a -12% decrease the employer and employee would save 6%. Therefore, the savings to the County for 2026 would be \$425,974.53. With the Medica proposal, they are also giving a one-time wellness credit of \$50,000. There are some parameters on how that can be used. This proposal also includes an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This would not replace the EAP that the County already has through Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT), it would simply be an added benefit. Medica will also provide and pay for a program called 'Healthy Invest' at no additional cost for two years, meaning employees can earn Health Savings Plan (HAS) or Voluntary Employee Benefit Account (VEBA) dollars by completing specific goals each month. Lastly, if the County decides to change to Medica from BCBS, the proposal will drop the 4th Quarter carryover, due to compliance issues. This was brought to the Insurance Committee who unanimously recommended the change to Medica.

Commissioner Krabbenhoft asked about the difference between BCBS and Medica. Ms. Moore stated BCBS initially came in at a 21.9% increase for 2026, then lowered two more times from 9.9% to 6%. Therefore, for BCBS it would have been a 6% increase compared to a -12% decrease for Medica.

Discussion ensued regarding Chiropractic care.

On motion by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, seconded by Commissioner Baer, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to support the Insurance Committee's recommendation for the health insurance renewal to be with Medica for the Passport/Cafeteria Plan for 2026 and 2027.

Committee Reports/County Administrator Update/Discussions

- Commissioner Mongeau reported on meetings for Metro COG TDP Open House; Planning Commission; PRTF Planning meeting; met with Representative Keeler regarding the PRTF/Non-Secure/Flood Mitigation; AMC Board of Directors Strategic Planning; Barnesville Potato Days; Lakeland Mental Health Center; and Flood Mitigation strategic session for bonding tour items.
- Commissioner Baer reported on meetings for Building Committee; and West Central Regional Water District.
- Commissioner Ebinger reported on meetings for Personnel Issues Committee; Greater FM EDC; Safe Routes to School Community Conversation; and FM Diversion Authority Financial plan meeting.
- Commissioner Krabbenhoft reported on meetings for Adult Mental Health LAC; PRTF Planning meeting; Historical & Cultural Society; Clay County Substance Abuse Committee; Clay County HRA Liaison; Health Insurance; Metro COG Policy Board; Safe Routes to School Community Conversation; CAPLP; and Health Insurance.
- Commissioner Campbell reported on meetings for Personnel Issues Committee; Building Committee; Health Insurance; West Central Regional Water District; and Health Insurance.
- County Administrator Stephen Larson reported on meetings for PIC; PRTF Planning meeting; Building Committee; met with Dale Arnold regarding Probation's Budget; Health Insurance; WCRWD; met with Kristin Christenson from Senator Klobuchar's Office; and we're looking to set our preliminary levy September 16, 2025, so we'll bring the budget forward to Board next week for further insight.
- Assistant County Administrator Darren Brooke reported on meetings for PIC; Board of Adjustment; Planning Commission; Government Center Operations meeting; Building Committee; MnCCC; met with Steve Larson and Anna Moore regarding personnel issues; reviewed responses to Corrections proposal; Health Insurance; meeting with Anna Moore and Steve Larson on personnel issue.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Kevin Campbell, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator