

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
8:30 AM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 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 (arrived at 8:31 a.m.), 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 Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Baer, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

National Opioid Settlement Information - Secondary Manufacturers” (Alvogen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Mylan, Sun, and Zydus)

By consent, the Board approved the National Opioid Settlement Information - Secondary Manufacturers” (Alvogen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Mylan, Sun, and Zydus.

Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit - Trojan Takedown Club - Bingo

By consent, the Board approved the Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for the Trojan Takedown Club - Bingo.

Employee Recognitions

The following employees were recognized: Darren Schenck for 25 years with the Sheriff's Office, Kathy McKay for 25 years with Public Health, and Sadie Albrecht for 15 years with Social Services.

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 Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the bills and vouchers totaling \$2,180,712 from 96 vendors. There were 74 warrants issued under \$2,000 (\$29,459) and the following 22 were over \$2,000.

Sellin Bros Inc	\$ 919,515	Moorhead Public Service	\$ 6,623
Hough, Inc	\$ 401,969	Wallwork Truck Center	\$ 6,412
RDO Equipment Co.	\$ 332,146	Valley Mortuary Services	\$ 5,701
Internal Revenue Serv	\$ 276,201	WEX Bank	\$ 5,163
Mn Dept Of Revenue	\$ 36,904	Houston Engineering Inc	\$ 4,689
Ulteig Operations, LLC	\$ 33,013	Psychotics	\$ 4,359
VEBA Select Account	\$ 31,631	Uline	\$ 3,895
Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste Auth	\$ 28,005	Nancy Hein-Kolo, P.C.	\$ 2,500

Historical & Cultural Society Of Clay Co	\$ 17,284	Amazon Capital Services	\$ 2,468
WEX Bank - Sheriff	\$ 14,703	State of MN Health Care Savings Plan	\$ 2,364
NACO	\$ 13,698	Reliance Telephone	\$ 2,000

Approval of Minutes from August 19, 2025

On motion by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes from August 19, 2025.

Request Approval to Hire Motor Grader Operator

County Engineer Justin Sorum requested approval to hire a Motor Grader Operator for the Highway Department due to a recent resignation. Per Union policy, this position will need to be posted internally for 5 days.

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the hiring of a Motor Grader Operator for the Highway Department with backfill.

Request Approval for the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) of Clay County to Levy and Collect a Special Benefit Tax

Clay County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Executive Director Dara Lee, Deputy Director Dawn Bacon, HRA Chair Tia Braseth, and Vice Chair Anthony Dilard, requested approval for the HRA to levy and collect a special benefit tax of \$300,000.00, which is no change from the previous year.

Commissioner Baer asked how many years the HRA has asked for this request. Ms. Lee stated the first time that the HRA has requested the levy was in 2007. Commissioner Baer asked if the HRA had been requesting this every year since 2007. Ms. Lee stated they have not. The HRA Board of Commissioners takes a look at how to balance the needs in the community versus the cost to the taxpayers. The HRA has only made this request when the need is critical.

Discussion ensued regarding the collaboration with Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP), the ability for homeowners to upgrade their housing and keeping people in their homes.

Commissioner Baer asked if the HRA could do the necessary work with a lesser amount. Ms. Lee stated unfortunately no.

On motion by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and carried, with one descending vote (Commissioner Baer), the Board approved the HRA of Clay County to Levy and Collect a special benefit tax of \$300,000.00 for 2026.

Budget Presentation - Probation

Probation District Supervisor Dale Arnold presented the 2026 budget for the Department of Corrections (DOC) – Probation and discussed statute 401.10 Funding Community Supervision, the state funding formula, total County budgeted expenditures including salaries, Sentence to Serve (STS), health insurance, PERA, Social Security, Medicare, rent, Juvenile Offender Restitution program (JORP), drug testing, travel, auto repair, conference registration, training, telephone, translator, office supplies, small & large equipment and equipment repair. The DOC contract comparison between 2024 and 2026, Clay County State Subsidy for 2026, the 2024

difference, Clay County formula totals for 2026, benefits of partnering with the DOC, collaborative projects, and what is new for 2026.

Commissioner Ebinger asked if Clay County paid Felony Probation Staff wages prior to 2026. Mr. Arnold stated no.

Discussion ensued regarding funding comparisons between 2025 and 2026, and what has changed in the 2026 Clay County Budget from 2025.

Request Approval for the 2026 Ancillary Insurance Offerings

HR Director Anna Moore requested approval for the 2026 Ancillary Insurance offerings. Ms. Moore stated during the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for health insurance, HR also inquired about ancillary benefits, and every single benefit for 2026 is being recommended from the Insurance Committee for a change. Ancillary benefits include hospital indemnity, critical illness, accident, dental, vision, voluntary Life AD&D, long-term disability, and short-term disability.

Hospital Indemnity insurance is a new offering in 2026, and completely voluntary to the employee. If this is elected, and the employee is hospitalized, they would receive a set payment from the insurance carrier.

Critical Illness insurance would be changing from the current carrier of Madison National Life to Standard for 2026. There is a significant cost savings to this and it's voluntary to the employee and no cost to the employer.

Accident insurance would be changing from the current carrier of Madison National Life to Standard for 2026. There is a savings on every tier and is voluntary to the employee and no cost to the employer.

Dental insurance will change from Delta Dental to United Healthcare for 2026. With this change the plan will offer implants. And for an additional \$0.97/month, the employee can select a different tier of coverage that would include orthodontic coverage for dependents under the age of 19. Clay County is currently self-insured for dental and have been operating claims over revenue, resulting in either increasing Delta Dental premiums or making a switch. Therefore, by making the change to United Healthcare, the County would go fully insured, and the carrier would take on the risk.

Vision insurance would change from Avesis to United Healthcare. This would result in a savings of approximately 7% to the member. One additional feature to this plan would be the actual exam. Clay County's health insurance covers the eye exam for any individual enrolled in the health insurance. But if employees have a dependent that is not on the health insurance, but is covered under vision, they would be eligible for an exam, with a small co-pay.

Long-Term Disability would be changing from the current carrier of Madison National Life to United Healthcare for 2026. This is completely voluntary to the employee with no cost to the employer.

Short-Term Disability would also change from Madison National Life to United Healthcare. There will be a savings in premiums, is voluntary to the employee, and no cost to the employer.

On motion by Commissioner Krabbenhoft, seconded by Commissioner Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to support the Insurance Committee's recommendations for the 2026 Ancillary Insurance offerings.

Discussion and Approval of the 2026 Paid Family Medical Leave Plan

Mr. Moore requested approval of the 2026 Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) Plan. Ms. Moore stated the State of Minnesota is passing a PFML program with implementation of January 1, 2026. The state proposal allowed employers to shop the private market, which Clay County did for comparison. The comparisons received are from United Healthcare and MetLife. Both the United Healthcare and MetLife proposals beat the state rate of 0.88%, pretty significantly. It's recommended to move forward with the United Healthcare proposal of 0.71%. The proposed cost for PFML with United Healthcare would be \$333,168.00. This would be a 50/50 split between the employer and the employee. PFML plan has no connection with Health Insurance or the County contribution.

Commissioner Campbell clarified that the 50/50 split has not yet been approved by the Board and would need Board action for confirmation.

Discussion ensued regarding the leave donation policy, employees supplementing their time, and continuing to run FMLA concurrently with PFML.

Mr. Larson stated this is a two-year contract, and in the event that something was to change at the state level, the County would not be responsible for paying either entity.

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Baer, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to support the Administration's recommendation to go with United Healthcare for the Paid Family Medical Leave Plan for 2026 and 2027.

Request Approval to Make Detox/WM a Standalone Department

Mr. Larson requested approval to make the Withdrawal Management/Detox division of Public Health an independent standalone department. With the level of responsibility that comes with this shift, the Detox Director would move from grade 22 to grade 25, which is an additional \$2,450.00 cost to this year's budget.

Mr. Larson stated there would still be a connection between the Detox Department with Public Health and Social Services, the decision making would now just sit with the Detox Director, rather than the Public Health Administrator.

Discussion ensued regarding the main benefits of separating the departments, and the change in process of hiring nurses.

On motion by Commissioner Baer, seconded by Commissioner Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to make Detox/WM a Standalone Department and Reclassify the Detox Director position.

Request Approval to Fill the Public Health Administrator Position

Mr. Larson requested approval to fill the Public Health Administrator position due to retirement.

With the Detox/Withdrawal Management division moving to a standalone department, this position would move from grade 27 to grade 26.

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Baer, and unanimously carried, the Board approved to Fill the Public Health Administrator Position with backfill.

BREAK

The Board took a break from 10:00 a.m. to 10:07 a.m.

2026 Budget Discussion

Mr. Larson provided the Board with a presentation for the 2026 budget.

Mr. Larson discussed the fund balance, summary of 2026 tax levy by fund, summary of Revenues over Expenditures by department for 2025, sales tax through July 2025, and non-County requests.

Commissioner Mongeau discussed cost shifts from the state, the difference from 2025 to 2026, citizens not being able to take on the burden of taxing to the level that we're seeing, and suggested 0% increases to the non-County agencies. Commissioner Baer echoed this statement.

Commissioner Campbell stated he would not support the 9.47% increase.

Commissioner Ebinger agreed with the statements regarding the external agencies and encouraged his fellow Commissioners to look at their portfolios to see where the County isn't seeing a return on investments.

Discussion ensued regarding external agency requests, Innovate28, the funds set aside for self-insurance, Economic Development Authorities of the Small Cities, the request for a Lobbyist, and the Barnesville Ambulance.

Commissioner Baer asked for further information on the training request that was made by the Technology Services Director.

Commissioner Campbell suggested looking at scheduling a Work Group Session next Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.

Committee Reports/County Administrator Update/Discussions

- Commissioner Baer reported on meetings for Clay County HRA Work Group Session.
- Commissioner Ebinger reported on meetings for Clay County HRA Work Group Session; RRRDC Board of Authority; FM Diversion Authority; PIC; and Moorhead Library Fundraiser.
- Commissioner Krabbenhoft reported on meetings for Clay County HRA Work Group Session.
- Commissioner Mongeau reported on meetings for Clay County HRA Work Group Session; Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste; FM Diversion Land Management; Solid Waste Advisory Committee; and University of MN Citizens Advisory Committee in collaboration with AMC Extension.
- Commissioner Campbell reported on meetings for Clay County HRA Work Group

Session; RRRDC Board of Authority; FM Diversion Land Management; Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste; Solid Waste Advisory Committee; PIC; and FM Diversion Authority.

- County Administrator Stephen Larson reported on meetings for Clay County HRA Work Group Session; met with Darren Brooke and Josh Heggem regarding Union Negotiations; SWAC; met with Kristin Christainason Senator Klobuchar's staff member; PIC; spoke with Dan Mahli on a series of shared issues; met with Derrick LaPoint regarding DEED Day; met with Sheriff Empting on a series of issues; and discussed the consent agenda item for the second National Opioid Settlement.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

Kevin Campbell, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator