

MINUTES

CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: Wednesday, September 3, 2025
TIME: 9:00 AM
PLACE: Courthouse – Conference Rm #302

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Leichtnam, Tom Buttke, Wayne Schulz, Russ Perlock, Tim Hovendick,

MEMBER EXCUSED: George Gilbertson

OTHERS PRESENT: Trent Miner, County Clerk; See attached sign-in list

1. Chairman Leichtnam called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and declared a quorum present.
2. There was no public comment.
3. The minutes of the August 6 & 13, 2025 meetings were presented. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Motion by Schulz/Hovendick to approve the vouchers, monthly department reports and committee reports. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Planning & Zoning Director Grueneberg and Darryl Landeau from the North Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission presented the updated Bike and Pedestrian Plan highlights to the committee. This plan updates the 1995 version and allows for grant funding opportunities going forward. A resolution was drafted to approve the plan at county board. Motion by Buttke/Perlock to approve the resolution and forward onto the county board for their consideration.
6. Tyler Freund from the Auburndale Park Association presented an update on the progress made at the Auburndale Park in the village and requested the economic funding grant dollars be released at this time. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the release of \$4,000 of economic development grant dollars to the association. Motion carried unanimously.
7. Extension Area Director Gatterman and Associate Dean Hausler presented the 2026 Extension budget which included an increase of FTE based on the loss of federal funding for the SNAP program. They propose having a county funded 80% position to replace the federally funded position. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the budget as presented and forward onto the Finance Dept. Motion carried unanimously.
8. Land & Water Conservation Dept. Program Assistant Peeters presented the revised 2026 LWCD budgets, amended from last month to incorporate additional state funding. Motion by Schulz/Buttke to approve the budget as presented and forward to the Finance Dept. Motion carried unanimously.
9. Peeters reviewed the current status of the Nitrate Well Testing and the funding of reverse osmosis systems, the Mill Creek Water Shed testing now being conducted by Wood County instead of Portage County, as well as the ongoing violations.

10. A field day is coming up highlighting various land conservation practices will be held at Albert Acres' in Junction City on October 7th. The committee was advised that if they plan to attend to let the County Clerk's office know so that it can be noticed in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.
11. Grueneberg, along with Planning & Zoning Staff presented the various 2026 Planning & Zoning budgets. The committee reviewed some of the projects and funding mechanisms within the department. Motion by Buttke/Schulz to approve the budgets as presented and forward them to the Finance Dept. Motion carried unanimously.
12. The CEED tour of Friday, September 12th highlighting various departmental projects within the county, was brought up with a reminder to register by September 5th.
13. Melissa Haack, the regional farmers market coordinator discussed the changes made in the administration of farmers markets in the state, requiring additional paperwork and reporting. They are requesting REDI funds in the amount of \$6,000 to help organize the Marshfield Festival Foods market and upgrade the Wisconsin Rapids Farmers Market. Motion by Schulz/Hovendick to approve the release of \$6,000 of REDI Implementation grant funding as requested. Motion carried unanimously.
14. Grueneberg presented the 2026 Transportation & Economic Development budget. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to approve the budget as presented and forward to the Finance Dept. Motion carried unanimously.
15. Chair Leichtnam presented some ideas on changes to the parameters for the economic development grant requests and requested the committee to come with their ideas to the October CEED meeting, where this item will be discussed.
16. The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1st, at 9:00 AM.
17. Motion by Buttke/Hovendick to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously at 11:06 AM.

Minutes taken by Trent Miner, County Clerk, and are in draft form until approved at the next meeting.

September 3, 2025

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