



Dakota County

Physical Development Committee of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

9:30 AM

**Conference Room 3A, Administration
Center, Hastings**

(or following General Government and Policy)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Commissioner Holberg.

Present

- Commissioner Mike Slavik
- Commissioner Joe Atkins
- Commissioner Laurie Halverson
- Commissioner William Droste
- Commissioner Liz Workman
- Chairperson Mary Liz Holberg
- Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland

Also in attendance were Heidi Welsch, County Manager; Tom Donely, First Assistant County Attorney; Georg Fischer, Physical Development Division Director; Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator.

The audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.

2. Audience

Commissioner Holberg asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the Physical Development Committee of the Whole on an item not on the agenda or an item on the consent agenda. No one came forward and no comments were submitted to CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us.

3. Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

3.1 Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

Motion: Mary Hamann-Roland

Second: Laurie Halverson

Ayes: 7

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On January 14, 2025

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: Liz Workman

Ayes: 7

4.2 Authorization To Amend Contract With Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. And Amend 2025 Transportation Capital Improvement Program Budget For Professional Services For County State Aid Highway 38 In Burnsville, County Project 38-61

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: Liz Workman

WHEREAS, to provide a safe and efficient transportation system, Dakota County is proceeding with County Project (CP) 38-61; and

WHEREAS, CP 38-61 is a preliminary corridor study intended to lay the groundwork for programming future projects within the corridor, including a traffic study, non-motorized crossing assessment, and recommendations report; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 23-585 (December 19, 2023), the County executed a contract with Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc., for a corridor study and preliminary engineering consulting services; and

WHEREAS, County staff recognizes and recommends that the proposed additional tasks are necessary to complete the project successfully; and

WHEREAS, staff negotiated an amount of \$129,500 with Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc., to complete the work; and

WHEREAS, a budget amendment is necessary to proceed with the consultant services contract amendment for CP 38-61.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Physical Development Director to execute a contract amendment with Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc., to perform additional engineering consulting services for County Project 38-61 in an amount not to exceed \$129,500, resulting in a total amended contract not to exceed \$279,415, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes a budget amendment to increase the budget to \$279,415 and transfer \$129,500 from the Transportation fund balance to County Project 38-61; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the 2025 Transportation Capital Improvement Program is hereby amended as follows:

Expense

County Project 38-61

\$129,500

Total Expense

\$129,500

Revenue

Transportation Fund Balance \$129,500

Total Revenue **\$129,500**

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 2/18/2025.

Ayes: 7

4.3 Authorization To Execute Contract With AJ Mobility dba Mobili-Fi, LLC., For Northern Service Center Distributed Antenna System Replacement And Amend 2025 Facilities Capital Improvement Program Budget

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: Liz Workman

WHEREAS, Dakota County owns and operates the Northern Service Center located at 1 Mendota Road, West St. Paul, MN 55118; and

WHEREAS, for several years, the cellular signal has been declining to the point of now adversely impacting life safety and emergency response in the facility; and

WHEREAS, the emergency notification in the building relies on expected cell coverage, and the Sheriff's Office staff cannot safely perform required building security functions without adequate cell coverage; and

WHEREAS, the Risk Management department manages all emergency drills and broadcasts active shooter and shelter notifications to all employees' mobile devices; and

WHEREAS, due to declining coverage in the building, many of these notifications are not coming through as expected; and

WHEREAS, staff worked with Verizon Wireless to implement local and temporary measures to bridge the period until a broader solution could be designed and implemented; and

WHEREAS, staff worked with Pierson Wireless to design and specify a commercial-grade Distributed Antenna System solution to broadcast all cell carriers' signals throughout the facility; and

WHEREAS the Request for Proposal was publicly advertised on the Dakota County website, with five proposals received by the due date; and

WHEREAS, staff met on January 30, 2025, to discuss the proposals and identify vendor rankings; and

WHEREAS, based on the rankings identified, vendor reference checks, and verification of proposal completeness, staff unanimously recommends AJ Mobility, dba Mobili-Fi, LLC., to complete the project; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends that the County Board of Commissioners authorize the Facilities Management Director to execute a contract with AJ Mobility, dba Mobili-Fi, LLC., for the Northern Service Center Distributed Antenna System Replacement project in an amount not to exceed \$388,394.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Facilities Management Director to execute a contract with AJ Mobility, dba Mobili-Fi, LLC., for the Northern Service Center Distributed Antenna System Replacement project in an amount not to exceed \$388,394, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the 2025 Facilities Management Capital Improvement Program budget be amended as follows. Funding is ready in the Prior Projects Saving Set-aside:

Expense

Prior Projects Savings Set-aside (1001646)	(\$388,394)
NSC Distributed Antenna System Project (TBD)	<u>\$388,394</u>
Total Expense	\$0

Revenue

Prior Project Savings Set-aside (1001646)	(\$388,394)
NSC Distributed Antenna System Project (TBD)	<u>\$388,394</u>
Total Revenue	\$0

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 2/18/2025.

Ayes: 7

4.4 Authorization To Execute Contract With Bolton & Menk, Inc. For Professional Services For Minnesota River Greenway In Burnsville And Eagan, County Project P00127

Motion: Joe Atkins

Second: Liz Workman

WHEREAS, the Minnesota River Greenway runs along the south side of the Minnesota River in Eagan and Burnsville, extending from I-35W in Burnsville to Lilydale Regional Park in Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 11-516 (October 18, 2011), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners adopted the Minnesota River Greenway Plan; and

WHEREAS, the rapidly developing and robust recreational network that has developed in the area has created increased demand for the completion of the trail connection between the recently constructed Lone Oak Trail Head, the Cedar-Nicols Trailhead, and the Minnesota River Greenway Black Dog Segment to the west; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 18-487 (October 11, 2018), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners authorized staff to proceed with consultant selection for the project to include 30 percent design for the river bottom trail (Project Component 1) and 100 percent design and engineering for the Union Pacific Railroad Bridge (Project Component 2); and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 18-608 (November 28, 2018), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners authorized staff to execute a contract with Bolton & Menk, Inc. for design services for the Union Pacific pedestrian bridge for a not-to-exceed amount of \$269,850; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 20-291 (June 16, 2020), the contract not-to-exceed amount was amended by \$69,730 to \$339,580 to address constraints to the bridge that are inherent to the project area; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 21-538 (November 16, 2021), the contract not-to-exceed amount was amended by \$292,000 to complete the design of the selected bridge alignment; and

WHEREAS, work was continued to complete the design of the bridge; and

WHEREAS, significant time and resources were required in reviewing and revising the bridge design with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, reviewing design and obtaining required permits from Union Pacific Railroad, and reviewing design and obtaining required permits from multiple state and local permitting agencies with jurisdiction over the project area; and

WHEREAS, these actions were necessary to secure all agreements and permits required to advance the project to construction; and

WHEREAS, a majority of this work was carried out beyond the end of the contract term of September 22, 2022; and

WHEREAS, staff recommends the execution of a new contract to enable payment for these additional necessary costs to produce a final design and obtain permits to proceed with construction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Parks Director to execute a contract with Bolton & Menk, Inc., to complete design services necessary to approve and construct the Union Pacific Railroad Pedestrian Bridge for the Minnesota River Greenway, Fort Snelling Segment (P00127) in an amount not to exceed \$149,158, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 2/18/2025.

Ayes: 7

5. Regular Agenda

5.1 Discussion And Direction On Dakota County Transit Priorities

Gina Mitteco, Regional and Multi-Modal Manager, presented this topic and responded to questions and comments from the committee.

The following individual was in the audience and spoke about this item:

- MVTA Chief Executive Officer Luther Wynder

The discussion focused on the broader transit issues impacting Dakota County. Several county commissioners highlighted the importance of engaging the entire county in transit planning and decision-making, noting that the MVTA currently serves only about half of the county's population. They argued that a more inclusive approach to transit services is essential for ensuring all residents have access to job opportunities and essential services.

The commissioners also emphasized the critical role of transit in connecting employees with employers, especially as the region continues to grow and evolve.

Additionally, the discussion addressed the ethical dilemmas faced by elected officials who serve on the MVTA board. Overall, the conversation aimed to promote a collaborative approach to enhance transit services throughout Dakota County. After significant discussion, Staff were directed to take steps toward rejoining MVTA.

The commissioners requested that staff identify federal funding and grant opportunities for regional transit projects. They also asked for a more comprehensive study on pedestrian safety that extends beyond the areas within the county's right-of-way. Additionally, they stressed the importance of engaging with the I-35W Solutions Alliance and other regional partners to coordinate transit initiatives effectively.

The Commissioners affirmed the proposed work plan, as presented by staff, with several minor recommended changes, as discussed above.

Information only; no action requested.

5.2 Update On Lebanon Hills Sustainable Trails Study Improvements

Mike Adams, Sr. Project Manager Greenways, presented this topic and responded to questions.

Staff discussed the Lebanon Hills Sustainable Trails Study Improvements, covering its background, key objectives, and recommendations for success.

Staff also outlined the phases of implementation, detailing the required steps and timelines.

Commissioners recommended involving students from the School of Environmental Studies to gather their insights on Wheaton Pond's water quality. They also raised concerns about shared equestrian hiking trails, mainly focusing on trail etiquette and potentially removing the equestrian pass system. Additionally, they discussed issues related to erosion and sustainability, highlighting the necessity for trail realignment to manage water flow and gravity effectively.

Discussions occurred regarding the effects of snow levels and trail mileage on various user groups and there would be no net change in the total trail miles across the park. The mountain bike community is expected to benefit from reduced unsafe intersections and the potential collaboration with the City of Eagan to create a skills area. Additionally, the re purposing of an old maintenance shed was noted.

Information only; no action requested

5.3 Authorization To Submit Grant Applications To Legislative-Citizen Commission On Minnesota Resources Program, Accept Grants If Awarded, And Execute Grant Agreements

Tony Wotzka, Parks Manager, presented this item and responded to questions.

The presentation discussed the 2026 Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) Request for Proposals, focusing on potential applications for Dakota County projects and staff members seeking authorization to submit these applications.

The commissioners instructed the staff to engage with the cities of Farmington, Lakeville, and others about the possibility of the county taking a more active role in leading some of the trail projects initiated by the cities. They also discussed revisiting the \$400,000 cost-sharing agreement for these city-led trail projects to determine if this amount is still appropriate.

After the discussion, the staff will re-submit an updated Request for Board Action. This revised request will remove all references to accepting and executing grants and grant agreements for five of the six proposed projects, excluding the \$300,000 Parks on the Go program. Additionally, they will provide letters of support for city-led projects, highlighting the importance of maintaining consistency and equity in funding strategies.

This agenda item was withdrawn, and consequently, no vote was conducted.

WHEREAS, the state Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) was established following voter approval of a 1988 constitutional amendment

“for the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state’s air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources”; and

WHEREAS, the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) was established to make funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature for special projects that help maintain and enhance Minnesota’s environment and natural resources, primarily from the ENRTF; and

WHEREAS, Dakota County has received previous ENRTF funding for developing the Farmland and Natural Areas Program, the Vermillion River Corridor Plan, acquisition and restoration of high-priority natural areas and shoreland projects, and the bison reintroduction project; and

WHEREAS, the LCCMR issued a 2026 Request for Proposals, which includes “Resiliency,” “Water,” “Education and Outdoor Recreation,” “Fish and Wildlife,” “Energy,” “Land” and “Small Projects” as priority funding categories; and

WHEREAS, approximately \$103 million from the ENRTF is projected to be available for LCCMR-recommended projects implemented between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2028; and

WHEREAS, Dakota County seeks up to \$15.7M for the following projects:

- Lake Byllesby Campground Building - Accessibility and Climate Resiliency Improvements- \$4.4M
- Lebanon Hills Regional Park- West Trailhead Natural Resources Restoration Project and Sustainable Trails Improvements- \$2.6M
- Parks-on-the-Go/Mobile Parks Program Equipment- \$300k
- River to River Greenway \$1.4M
- Thompson County Park Master Plan Improvements \$4M
- Veterans Memorial Greenway-Rich Valley Park Main Memorial Trailhead- \$3M

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners supports the above-referenced projects and authorizes the Physical Development Division Director, or designee, to submit a proposal for funding of these projects on behalf of Dakota County to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources in response to the 2026 Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund Request for Proposal; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, if funding is awarded, Dakota County agrees to accept the awards and may enter into agreements with the state of Minnesota for the above-referenced projects and comply with all applicable laws, environmental requirements, and regulations and any additional conditions stated in the grant agreement and the approved Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources work plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Dakota County understands that grants utilizing the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund are generally paid out on a reimbursement basis, and the County has the financial capability to pay for project expenses prior to seeking reimbursement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Physical Development Division Director is hereby authorized to execute such agreements and work plans as necessary and is authorized to implement the project on behalf of Dakota County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Dakota County has the financial capability to meet the match requirements and ensure adequate construction, operation, and maintenance of the projects once completed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners authorizes the Physical Development Division Director to use the Parks Capital Improvement Program to provide a twenty five percent match to provide a competitive application for capital improvement projects.

6. Physical Development Director's Report

Georg Fischer, Physical Development Director, provided the Committee with a written Division update.

7. Future Agenda Items

Chair, Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg, asked the Committee if anyone had a topic they would like to hear more about at an upcoming Physical Development Committee of the Whole. No Commissioners requested topics for future meetings at this time.

8. Adjournment

8.1 Adjournment

Motion: Mike Slavik

Second: Mary Hamann-Roland

On a motion by Commissioner Mike Slavik, seconded by Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Ayes: 7

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Hansen
Administrative Coordinator