



Deputy County Manager Update

Central Operations Division

Date: February 3, 2026

Central Operations Administration

Numerous staff from the Central Operations Division continue to work on our **new website** and the issue of **accessibility** of Dakota County information. New accessibility rules go into place in April 2026 and our new website is scheduled to go live this summer. These two projects are competing for the same staff resources and timelines and has caused some concerns with staff. We are doing our best to move both projects forward, but I wanted you to be aware of these issues. I have full faith in staff that they are doing their best work and will continue to do so as we move forward. You will hear more on both issues as we move throughout 2026.

Jail and Integrated Health Unit Data

As you recall, the board asked to see numbers related to jail and integrated health unit numbers as a part of the December 2025 goal setting meeting. I am working with the Sheriff's Office to gather these numbers for future reports. Due to the ongoing issues with the Metro Surge, this project was delayed in January. The other item you asked for was some information on the success of the Integrated Health Unit. In discussions with Sheriff Leko, he shared that outcomes can be difficult to measure in this area. He understands the request and plans on presenting on this topic to the County Board this fall.

American Rescue Plan and Local Fiscal Recover Fund Quarterly Report

Last week finance staff submitted the fourth quarter 2025 **American Rescue Plan** quarterly report to the federal government. I am happy to report that of the \$83,322,300 that Dakota County received, to date we have spent or committed \$83,144,676. This means that 99.78% of these funds have been used by the county on a variety of projects. Staff is assuming we will only need to submit one additional report on these dollars. Kudos to finance staff for the work in getting these dollars committed and the for the work that goes into reporting its use.

Finance

Finance staff are preparing to present information to the board at the first **Finance Work Session** scheduled for February 10, 2026. At this meeting, staff will be sharing information on the five-year levy and General Fund forecast. They also have a separate item on Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA) that will be a high-level overview of the dollars we spend on housing related services. All of us are looking forward to these monthly meetings to continue our efforts in transparency and education when it comes to the annual budget and overall county financial health.

Office of Performance and Analysis

Office of Performance and Analysis (OPA) staff have been leading a project looking at the issue of safety in the workplace. While standards and protocol exist to both train and prepare staff in safely handling client interactions, as well as appropriately responding to safety incidents, there remains questions regarding roles, responsibilities and best practices between departments and divisions. Given this, senior leadership expressed a need to better understand and determine what the County's responsibility and role is in maintaining staff safety while in county facilities and when interacting with clients. This OPA project will look at safety from a countywide perspective and, as needed, make recommendations regarding the approach to safety measures to ensure Dakota County staff feel safe when interacting with clients.

Information Technology

I am happy to report that the IT Department, in conjunction with the Risk and Emergency Management Department, have developed a formal process to submit subrogation claims related to the cutting of county owned fiber lines. As you can imagine with the amount of development in Dakota County, we have been experiencing an increasing number of fiber line cuts each year. These fiber cuts by private companies have potential significant impacts on county business. This process enables us to recoup the cost of repairing the damage to our fiber lines. We recently submitted requests for **over \$89,000** in damage to our fiber. I want to thank both the IT Department and Risk and Emergency Management Department for working together on this process.

Reorganization

The IT Department is undergoing some reorganization to better deliver services to our internal customers. With more demands than resources, it was important to prioritize the use of tax dollars to best deliver services to our county customers. Another one of our priorities with the reorganization was to be able to implement additional safeguards around **cybersecurity**. The cyber world changes each day, and the county needs to do more, and I am happy to say that these increased protections have started. While changes like these typically do not cross into the purview of the County Board, it is

important that you know that the IT leadership is moving the department forward and preparing for the future.

Board Room Project

The project scheduled to update technology in the County Board Room continues to move forward, including the direction you provided for future committee meetings on January 20, 2026. The updated scheduled work in the board room will take place in May and June 2026 and cause the June 9, 2026, and June 23, 2026, board meetings to be moved to 3A. If this schedule changes, new dates will be included in future updates.

Risk and Emergency Management

2026 Risk Management Actuarial Analysis

For more than 20 years, Dakota County Risk Management has partnered with Actuarial Advisors, Inc. to complete a comprehensive analysis of the liabilities retained by the county in our workers compensation and property/casualty self-insurance programs. This analysis will also provide recommended funding levels for both programs for the 2026-2029 budget cycle. Conducted every three years, this analysis is a key input in evaluating the county's **liability loss reserve fund** and long-term self-insurance funding strategy.

Byllesby Dam Insurance Status Update

Risk Management has provided ongoing oversight of insurance and risk obligations for the Byllesby Dam project and expanded its involvement in late 2024 to ensure compliance with the county's grant agreement with the State of Minnesota. The county secured a builders risk insurance policy covering the full project value beginning in January 2025. The contractor carried the policy prior to this date. The builders risk policy has been extended twice, most recently through April 1, 2026, due to project delays. While Risk Management was in the midst of requesting the April 1, 2026, extension, the insurance underwriter heard of the issue raised with our international contractor having concerns related to the Metro Surge. Risk Management worked to ensure the insurer that the work would proceed, and the insurer agreed to extend the builders risk policy and provide a quote for permanent property insurance to be placed upon completion of the interconnect testing. All insurance premiums and deductibles for the dam are funded directly from the Byllesby Dam Fund.

Questions

If you have questions on any of this information, please contact Deputy County Manager David McKnight at david.mcknight@co.dakota.mn.us or 651-438-4286. Thank you for your time on this important matter.

