

**Minutes of the Meeting of the March 12, 2026 Sawyer County
Administration Committee of the Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Board Room; Sawyer County**



Voting Committee Members (X) Present:

Others Present:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| ☒ Chair: Ron Kinsley | Mike Markgren |
| ☒ Vice Chair: Ron Buckholtz | Liz Klein |
| ☒ Tom Duffy | Gary Elliot |
| ☐ John Righeimer- Excused | |
| ☒ Stacey Hessel | |

Call to Order –Chair Ron Kinsley called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met. Roll Call taken; quorum was met.

Meeting Agenda – Set

Public Comments – None

Minutes from the previous meeting dated: February 12, 2026

Motion to approve by: Mr. Duffy

Second by: Ms. Hessel

Motion carried without negative vote.

County Clerk Report-

Ms. Klein provided a written department report and updated the committee on preparations for the April election, one on one training with new municipal clerks and updates to the county website.

Veterans Service Office Report -

Mr. Elliot provided a written report of February department activity: 521 phone calls, 779 letters/emails/faxes sent and 178 office visits. VSO contacts have been steadily increasing. 30 disability claims have been filed to date with \$94,606.72 awarded in Veterans' favor. Valentines were delivered to area veterans. The department is co-hosting counseling sessions at La Crosse Vet Center, hosting Coffee & Conversation, and hosted a Northern WI Tribal VSO training for 20 counties. The social media report was provided.

Veteran's Tribute Update-

Demolition RFPs (Discussion and Possible Action)- Mr. Markgren received 9 responses to his RFP request. The low bidder was JR Excavating at \$19,200, with three good references and a COI provided. The project is for the complete demo and removal of materials from the site.

Motion to accept the JR Excavating bid at \$19,200 with discretion of the Administrator of up to \$25,000 total for unanticipated expenses by: Ms. Hessel Second by: Mr. Buckholtz
Motion carried without negative vote.

Mr. Ken Disher, engineer for Excel Energy, provided information on power lines at the site and will meet with Mr. Markgren and Excel staff at 11:00 am March 12 to look at it.

Committee Design Discussion- Ms. Hessel presented proposed design materials to the committee for discussion. The proposed site design includes names and resources for Veterans and is maintenance free and durable, with a stamped cement surface and landscape lighting. The projected completion date is November 1, 2026.

Information Technology Department Report -

Mr. Coleson provided a written IT report on ongoing IT projects.

Human Resources Report -

A written report was provided on staffing and recruiting for open positions within the county. Mr. Markgren noted again that the county has been receiving high quality applicants for open positions.

Discussion of Tax Levy Freeze—

Mr. Markgren presented a resolution other counties are adopting to request the ability to increase the levy beyond net new construction and tie it to CPI, with a 3.5% cap.

Resolution 2026-____ CPI Legislative Action to Address County Funding Challenges was approved for recommendation to County Board on a motion

by: Mr. Buckholtz Second by: Ms. Hessel

Motion carried without negative vote.

Closed Session-

Chairman Kinsley handed over meeting to Vice-chair Buckholtz for a closed session and abstained from the session.

At 10:36am a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to: Wis. Stat. § 19.85(1)(c), “considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction to employ or exercises responsibility,” to wit, for purposes of discussing separating the Finance Department from Administration was made by: Mr. Duffy Second by: Ms. Hessel

A roll call vote was taken: Ron Kinsley- abstained, Ron Buckholtz- aye, Tom Duffy- aye, Stacey Hessel- aye.
Motion carried.

At 10:43 am the committee reconvened in open session on a motion by: Mr. Duffy Second by: Ms. Hessel

Motion to separate the Finance Department from Administration and promote Rhandi Ehn to Finance Director

By: Ms. Hessel Second by: Mr. Duffy

Motion carried without negative vote (Mr. Kinsley abstaining).

Vice-chair Buckholtz handed the meeting back to Chairman Kinsley.

Board Appointed Committee Updates – None

Correspondence, reports from conferences and meetings— Ms. Hessel stated that the Senate is voting on the Forestry Revitalization Act on March 17.

Future Agenda Items- None

Adjournment – 10:46 am

Next Meeting: April 9, 2026

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Board Room

Minutes recorded by Liz Klein, County Clerk