

**Minutes of the September 18, 2025 Meeting of the
Sawyer County Board of Supervisors
Sawyer County Courthouse/Virtual**



Voting Committee Members Present (X)	Roll Call	District	Wards
☒ Steve Kariainen	01	T Lenroot W-1, T Hayward W-7, C Hayward W-5	
☒ Kay Wilson	02	T Lenroot W-2, T Round Lake W-1	
☒ Tweed Shuman	03	T Hayward W-1 & 2	
☒ Stacey Hessel	04	T Hayward W-3 & 4	
☒ Randy Neumann	05	T Hayward W-5 & 6	
☒ Marc D. Helwig- Virtual	06	C Hayward W-1 & 2	
☒ Thomas W. Duffy	07	C Hayward W-3 & 4	
☒ Marshal Savitski	08	T Bass Lake W-1 & 2	
☒ Jim Evans	09	T Bass Lake W-3 & 4	
☒ Chuck Van Etten	10	T Sand Lake, T Edgewater W-1	
☒ Jeff Hoehne	11	T Edgewater W-2, T Bass Lake W-5, T Meteor, T Couderay, V Couderay	
☒ John Righeimer	12	T Spider Lake, T Round Lake W-2, T Winter W-1	
☒ Ron Kinsley	13	T Hunter, T Radisson W-1, T-Ojibwa W-1, V Radisson	
☒ Ron Buckholtz	14	T Radisson W-2, T Ojibwa W-2, T Weirgor, V Exeland, T Meadowbrook	
☒ Dale Magnuson- Virtual	15	T Winter W-2, T Draper, V Winter	

Also present: Mike Markgren, Liz Klein, Jay Kozlowski, John Pinnow, Doug Mrotek, Ariga Grigorian, Carl Green

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance– Chair Kinsley called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Roll call was taken; quorum was met.

Certification of Compliance with the open meeting law was met.

Meeting Agenda – Set

Public Comments – Tim Davison, Linda Zillmer, Nancy Schryer

Minutes from the previous meeting dated: August 21, 2025

Motion to approve by: Mr. Duffy

Second by: Mr. Savitski

Motion carried without negative vote.

Sheriff's Department—Terms for a three-year contract were agreed on during labor negotiations with the Union.

Motion to ratify the Sheriff's Department Union Contract by: Mr. Buckholtz Second by: Mr. Righeimer

Motion carried without negative vote.

Zoning Committee –

Mr. Buckholtz reported that 463 LUP applications were received year-to-date. The Camping Cabins ordinance was referred back to the zoning committee and will be discussed again on September 19.

RZN #35-006--Mr. Kozlowski discussed the history of the parcel and stated that Round Lake approved 5-0 and no neighbors' objections were received.

Resolution to Amend Sawyer County Official Zoning Map- Case RZN #35-006, Duffy Development was approved on a motion by: Mr. Shuman Second by: Mr. Evans
Motion carried without negative vote.

RZN #25-007—Mr. Kozlowski discussed the rezone from F-1 to Ag-2 and stated that the Town of Draper approved 3-0 and no objections were received.

Resolution to Amend Sawyer County Official Zoning Map- Case RZN #25-007, Stefanski was approved on a motion by: Mr. Shuman Second by: Mr. Savitski
Motion carried without negative vote.

Public Works Committee—

Mr. Kinsley reported on Maintenance, Airport and Highway projects. There is no update on the Airport Master Plan at this time.

Public Safety Committee —

Mr. Buckholtz reviewed the September 4 Jail, Code Enforcement, Emergency Management, Dispatch, Child Support, and Ambulance reports for the board.

Land, Water and Forest Resources Committee--

Mr. Kariainen reviewed the September 10 Register of Deeds, Land Records, Surveyor, Forestry, Zoning Conservation and Trails reports.

Fish Trap Dam Land Swap—

Mr. Kozlowski explained the Fish Trap Dam engineer recommended acquiring additional shoreline to install rock on the down-river side for the type of dam proposed. The county can exchange a similar piece of land it holds on the up-river side with the adjacent landowner, Mr. Perry: the sf will be the same. Maps of the parcels were reviewed and discussed.

Motion to approve the Fish Trap Dam land swap with the County Clerk as the signer for the county by: Mr. Buckholtz
Second by: Ms. Hessel
Motion carried without negative vote.

HHS Report—

Ms. Wilson reported on the September 9 meeting of HHS; two staff members are retiring, ADRC and Behavioral Health reports were reviewed, Children, Youth and Family Services, Economic Support, and Public Health updates were provided; there are 25 confirmed cases of measles in Wisconsin. Mr. McKay gave an update on TRH licensing and the budget was reviewed.

TGB member Ms. Lorraine Gouge will serve as the newly appointed LCO Liaison to the HHS Board upon confirmation by the County Board.

Motion to approve the appointment of Lorraine Gouge to the HHS Board by: Mr. Shuman Second by: Ms. Wilson
Motion carried without negative vote.

Finance Report -

Mr. Righeimer provided an update on county finances and department budgets.

Mr. Markgren gave a preliminary presentation on the 2026 County Budget: the agenda packet presentation slides were reviewed in detail. Net new construction and sales tax revenues are up, many expenses have also increased. There is an overall proposed property tax levy increase, but the levy rate will decrease by 1.27% for 2026.

Sawyer County has the lowest tax rate among eight neighboring NW Wisconsin counties.

Discussion about room tax collected and how it affects the HLVCB Budget request.

Economic Development and UW Extension Committee—

Mr. Righheimer gave the Economic Development and UW Extension Committee report.

Mr. Helwig commented on the lines for Clean Sweep and asked if there will be a second event. Ms. Grigorian stated that a second electronics recycling event will be scheduled in Spring 2026. The regular Clean Sweep is annual, in September.

County Administrator Report—

Mr. Kinsley reported that the Administration Committee met and heard reports from the County Clerk, Veterans, IT, and HR departments, an update on the Veterans Tribute and 2026 Budget.

Mr. Markgren provided a written report and gave updates on recent topics: he stated that he has been working on the 2026 Budget, the Airport loan has not closed yet, there is no update on the Airport Master Plan, the Veterans Tribute environmental report is 1317 pages and requires review, the Annual WTA Conference is next week, and the WOJB Tower discussion with LCO is ongoing with GenComm.

Mr. Markgren updated the Board on the CJCC meeting. TGB member Lorraine Gouge will be one of two liaisons from LCO on the committee pending confirmation by the County Board:

Motion to appoint Lorraine Gouge to the seat on the CJCC by: Mr. Buckholtz

Second by: Ms. Wilson

Motion carried without negative vote.

Strategic Plan Areas of Focus—

Carl Green and Ariga Grigorian provided an exercise for the Supervisors to select their top three priority areas of focus for the Strategic Plan. Budgeting and Finance was first, followed by a tie vote for Operational Efficiency and Innovation and Affordable Workforce Housing. Workforce Retention, Compensation, Culture and Staff Development tied for third with Mental Health. These priorities will be shared with staff to determine how to implement them.

Board Appointed Committee Updates— Mr. Buckholtz updated the committee on Namekagon Transit ridership and routes; Mr. Kariainen handed out reports from ICAA; Ms. Hessel provided dates and Times for two Walk for Tomorrow Suicide Awareness events on September 20 and 27.; Mr. Savitski updated the board on the Senior Resource Center fundraising committee meeting.

Correspondence, Reports from Conferences and Meetings- None

Future Agenda Items- None

Adjournment-- 8:18 pm

Next meeting: Thursday, October 16, 2025 Time: 6:30pm Location Board Room

Minutes recorded by Liz Klein, County Clerk