

PROCEEDINGS OF THE STEELE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR SESSION

June 10, 2025

STATE OF MINNESOTA }
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COUNTY OF STEELE }

The Steele County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session at 4:00 p.m. on June 10, 2025 with Commissioner's Brady, Glynn, Prokopec, Abbe and Krueger present. Also present were Human Resources Director Gina McGuire, Finance Director Candi Lemarr, IT Director Dave Purscell, County Assessor Brian Anderson, County Attorney Robert Jarrett, PT&E Director Jennifer Mueller, Public Health Director Amber Aaseth, and County Administrator Renae Fry.

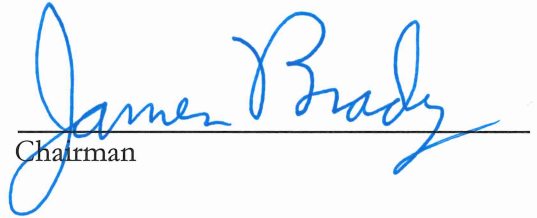
Julie Summy, the Co-Founder of the Teen Lodge provided an overview of this new organization in Steele County. As a 5013C, they were established in January 2023. Homeless teens were brought to Julie's attention three years ago. Although the number of homeless teens changes in our community, to the Teen Lodge board, one homeless teen is too many. Their goal is to create home settings. The organization feels if these teens have a home setting to grow, thrive, and hopefully they can form them into responsible adults. With the help of the Eagles, Teen Lodge has put \$ 5,000 into the pantry at the high school and alternative school. Through social media they have received 18 duffel bags to donate. They have raised \$40,000 through fundraising and have identified dates and themes. With a shortfall of funding, Teen Lodge is looking into DHS and state level for funding.

Lorrie Rugg, Master Gardener Coordinator and Lisa Dierks, Regional Director at the Extension Office gave an update on the Master Gardener Program. From 2020 to today we have grown from 17 to 41 Active Master Gardener's. They currently have 12 projects they work with. The largest of them would be the Community Garden and the Blue-Ribbon Learning Garden. Steele County Master Gardener volunteers reported over 2,300 hours of research-based gardening knowledge we shared with our community. The University values those hours at \$34.77 which equates to almost \$80,000.00 worth of free gardening education. All members log well more than the minimum of 25 hours as they have such a passion for gardening. Currently they have 8 interns who are working hard on becoming Master Gardeners.

Renae Fry gave a brief update regarding human services. HMA is in contact with DHS and DCYF. They need Steele County to confirm the desired date of transition and with that information, they will develop their own internal timeline for establishing the necessary accounts with each agency.

HMA is gathering and reviewing client data to use in identifying the structures and related best practices that will serve the anticipated needs of Steele County clients. Renae will be meeting with Tara to discuss the HR and IT services contracts. Both arrangements will end as of December 2025 and MNPrairie is interested in extending the IT contract.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.


Chairman

ATTEST:


Administrator