

**Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation
District Regular Board Meeting
August 28, 2025
8:15 am
611 Broadway Avee, Suite 10B**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Lynn Zabel, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:15 am.

Supervisors Present: Lynn Zabel, Chair, Chet Ross, Co-Chair, Sharleen Klennert, Treasurer, Dag Knudsen, Member

Staff Present: Terri Peters, District Manager

Others Present: Bob Walkes, County Commissioner, Christina Taylor, NRCS, Dave Copeland, BWRS and Frank Klennert, Citizen

II. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

III. AGENDA

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve The Agenda with the addition of Old Business, Letter D. Resolution 08282025-1.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments limited to 5 minutes per speaker

V. CONSENT AGENDA -Board Action

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Board and may be enacted through one motion. Any item on the Consent Agenda may be removed by any of the Board members for separate consideration

i. Contract Amendments

- A. June E. Ratz Trust Amendment# 2 for Contract# 24-CC-5 to change the Install by date to 12/31/2025 instead of 7/31/2025 for 314 Brush Management.

(Funding source – FY24 Conservation Contracts)

Motioned by Knudsen and seconded by Ross to approve the Contract Amendments.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

ii. Vouchers

- A. Greg Speedling Voucher payment for Contract# 25-CC-2 in the amount of \$1,678.00 for Practice 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation.

(Funding source – FY25 Conservation Contracts)

Motioned by Knudsen and seconded by Ross to approve the Vouchers.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VI. SECRETARY'S REPORT

- A. July 24, 2025, Meeting Minutes – Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Secretary's Report.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT – Board Action

- A. July District Financial Statements

Included for your review

- B. July Program Record

Discussion on decrease in SWCD Aid funding. A \$30,000.00, (7%) reduction. This funding is our general fund covers some staff time. Terri was asked by Dag how many months of funds were available to cover District expenses. She replied that the district has funds of \$350k for which would cover about 6-7 months. She will be watching the balance. Dave said that BWSR would suggest 6–9-month funds.

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Treasurer's Report to the best of our ability.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VIII. PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS

- A. Monthly Bills in the amount of \$41,656.74 - Board Action

Motioned by Knudsen and seconded by Klennert to approve Payment of the Monthly Bills in the amount of \$41,656.74.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IX. DISTRICT REPORTS

- A. Chair Report – Lynn Zabel
- B. County Commissioner – Bob Walkes
*Hired new Auditor/Treasurer that has 10 years of experience as an Auditor/Treasurer. Most recently in Olmsted County.
Budget – Looking through line items. Trimming needs to be done, not final yet.
Attended Township Meeting last week. Steve Jacob and Pam Altendorf were there.
Talked about prison closing in Stillwater. County Department Heads were there.*
- C. District Manager Report – Terri Peters
*Missed Township Meeting but sent report with Tammy and Sharleen to present.
Wabasha County Fair – Thank you to who helped fill time slots.
We had water testing on Friday at the fair.
Covered payroll for Sue while she was on bereavement leave.
We have one Well Inventory Grant and are getting a new Well Inventory Grant.
Katelyn and Ella will be working on them.
RCPP Grant – figuring what we can and can't do. Follow guidelines. NRCs will be checking this. More discussions to come on this grant.
WAGZ Tour
WinLaC Meeting – Showed the Stream Restoration project by St. Charles.
BWSR Tour – Stopped at one of our RIM projects.
Construction season, busy finding funding for staff projects.
Working with Darin Thompson. MPCA grant for septic systems. Low income, that have failing septic systems or imminent threat. Darin will be assessing and working with Terri on ranking.
Paid Family Leave. Paid through the state. Worked with SWCD Managers and Shawn. There are private insurance options. Will be looking over those. More info will be coming later.*
- D. NRCS Report – Christina Taylor – (In the packet)
Gave report at the meeting. Discussion with board members.
- E. District Technician Report- Matt Kempinger – (In the packet)
- F. Natural Resources Technician Report– Katelyn Abts – (In the packet)
Discussion on Wells, Well Inventory.
- G. Soil Health/Nutrient Management Tech Report – Deanna Pomije – (In the packet)
- H. Conservation Planning & Outreach Technician – Ella Jurgerson – (In the packet)
*Ella started full-time July 14. Sitting in with Deanna and producers for cover crops.
She has been checking the lysimeters after it rains. Gophers have been eating through PVC tubing, so we had changed to metal tubing in the Spring. Buckets are buried under the ground with screen on top. Design isn't good, we will be looking at different options. West Indian Creek grant extension, 2nd round of funding.*

- I. BWSR Report – Dave Copeland
First wanted to thank the SWCD staff for the BWSR tour for the Conservationists. Visited Dave Hager – Bluff land RIM -Kately, Matt, Terri and Jen. Also visited a Wetland bank in the area and Gorman Creek. BWSR meeting this morning (8-28) to approve board recommendations. Authorize funds watershed based. Slight increase – 3-year grants, given every 2 years. They will be approving operation program grants for SWCD's. Conservation Delivery Grant and the Conservation Contracts Grant. New, will be giving out two 1-year grants, but give the money upfront. We can use the 2nd year funds if needed earlier.
NRBG grants – 3% increase this biennium. Local water planning, shoreland and WCA. SWCD reports on all of these.
Legislation funded \$12 million a year that gets divided between 87 SWCD's Funds should be coming for programs, grants in a couple of weeks.
October 21 – October 23, 2025, BWSR Academy. 17th year that BWSR has organized. 90-minute hands-on workshops for County, SWCD's and Watershed employees.
- J. Other –

X. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Conservation Project – Lynn (open to any Supervisor for ideas)
Lynn cut off rye and oats. Clip weeds, so they don't go to seed. Fall plant grain and alfalfa. Plant corn in the Spring.
Bob Walkes added that he did something different this year. Split the planter with 6-rows of corn and 6-rows of sunflowers on 3.5 acres. Provide some animal nutrition for beef cows. Further discussion followed.
- B. Submit Farmer of the Year and Woodland Manager of the Year to MASWCD.
Deanna is doing the application for Alan Jostock for Farmer of the Year. We do not have a nominee for Woodland Manager of the Year.
- C. Deanna – Discussion & Presentation of Soil Health Adoption.
Soil health demonstrations at the fair. Baggy with Oreo crumbs and gummy worms. Recipe for better, healthier soil. Multiple benefits to improve soil. Cover crops and No-till. Producers will have lower fertilizer use overtime for healthy soil. Implement principles, develop a good environment for soil health. Improve the structure of the soil.
Producers focus on cover crops, because they are popular. Helps to get healthy soil in place. The more practices used, the better. Top reasons are erosion protection, weed suppression and improving soil health. Asked about number of acres in cover crops this year compared to last year. Further discussion with the board.
Dag has a senior that is working on a Sustainable Act Scholarship project. She would like to interview farmers to see why they are reluctant to change. Connect with Deanna, she would ask farmers first if they would do an interview and then let her know of farmers that agree to do the interview.

- D. Resolution 08282025-1 A Resolution Designating Signature Authority for Terri Peters, District Manager for the SWCD, to sign RCPP cover crop contracts after batching and before the monthly board meeting.

Terri will revise the resolution wording per explanation at the meeting.

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Resolution 08282025-1 to Designate Signature Authority for Terri Peters, District Manager for the SWCD, to sign cover crops, and the RCPP cover crop contracts after batching and before the monthly board meeting.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Contract Ron Meiners to work with Ella & other staff, training on field walkovers.
- Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve contracting Ron Meiners to work with Ella & other staff, training on field walkovers.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

- B. Townsquare Media July/August Healthy Soils Campaign – Discussion

Terri played the videos of our Healthy Soil campaign. Playing on Facebook.

- C. Approve Gareth & Mary Lou Hager Contract# 25-CC-10 in the amount of \$300.00 for 314 Brush Management. Installed by date 12-31-2025 – Board Action
(Funding source – FY25 Conservation Contracts)

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve Gareth & Mary Lou Hager Contract# 25-CC-10 in the amount of \$300.00 for 314 Brush Management.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

- D. Approve David A & Catherine K Schmidt Trust Contract# 2025WinLaC-Wab003 in the amount of \$350.00 for Woodland Stewardship Plan. Installed by date 6-30-2026 – Board Action

(Funding source – FY23 WinLaC)

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve David A & Catherine K Schmidt Trust Contract# 2025WinLaC-Wab003 in the amount of \$350.00 for Woodland Stewardship Plan.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

- E. General update on the Soil Health Programs.
RCPP Technical Assistance used all of the \$180,000.00. Extra \$10,000.00 over. Ready to request next \$120,000.00. Use for cover crops, no-till, conservation cover. Over winter, tree planting, windbreak. Enter in ELink to show money encumbered, to get next round of funds. Letters of support for Olmsted, request funding from legislature. Did not get. Lessard-Sams application same type of program, working on work plan. 11 districts, \$250,000.00 for TA to administer program. Flexibility, self-certification, comparable to Olmsted program. First year of WinLac funding encumbered for cover crops. no-till. WAGZ \$0 left for cover crops this year, will have funds next year, new work plan.
- F. Approve current batched and ranked 2025 RCPP contracts - August – Board Action
Terri described report to the board. Scoring and total ranking points. Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve the current batched and ranked 2025 RCPP contracts – August. Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel Opposed: None Motion Carried
- G. Wabasha fiscal agent for a \$18k contract from DNR. 10% available for admin. – Discussion/Board Approval
Contract to pay consultants a stipend to write project plans. DNR will administer the associated cost share dollars (\$82,000). These dollars do not come through SWCD. Contract goes through June 30, 2027.
SWCD would get the \$18,000.00 contract from DNR. It will be like the last DNR contract, working with private foresters/consultants. Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the \$18,000.00 contract from the DNR with 10% being available for administration expenses. Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel Opposed: None Motion Carried
- H. Approve Bernard Schumacher Contract# 23-CWF-WIC-08 in the amount of \$11,520.00 for a 410 Grade Stabilization Structure. Installed by date 11-30-2026 – Board Action
(Funding source – FY23 West Indian Creek Watershed Restoration and Protection)
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Bernard Schumacher Contract# 23-CWF-WIC-08 in the amount of \$11,520.00 for a 410 Grade Stabilization Structure. Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel Opposed: None Motion Carried

I. Upcoming Events

- i. Monday, September 1, 2025, Labor Day – Offices Closed
- ii. Wednesday, Thursday September 10 & 11, 2025, MASWCD – Stewardship Summit: SWCD Governance & Leadership Essentials. St. Cloud.
Sharleen is attending.
- iii. Thursday, October 2, 2025, Area 7 Joint Fall Meeting, SE MASWCD and SE MACDE for Staff & Board. Grand Meadow, MN. Registration is due on September 15th.
After the meeting we will be going to the Chert Quarry/Wanhi Yukan Preserve. (Walking Trail)
Sharleen and Frank will attend. Lynn tentatively, depends on field work. Board members should reach out and invite Legislators to join us at the meeting.
- iv. Thursday, September 25, 2025, Regular Meeting

XII. Board Reports

- A. Whitewater JPB – Lynn
Don't over apply fertilizer.
- B. Zumbro 1W1P – Dag
Tour of five projects. Good to go see them in the field.
Martin Larson graph, talked about cover crops. Olmsted will make a summary.
Review of Budget. 22-23 Workplan money spent.
24-25 tracking financially. Approved manure storage project, small farm operator max funding \$200,000.00.
- C. WinLaC 1W1P – Lynn
- D. SE SWCD Technical Support JPB – Dag
- E. County Board Meeting – Sharleen
Sharleen gave report for Terri.

XIII. Adjourn

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to Adjourn the meeting at 10:45 am
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried

Respectively Submitted By:



Seth Tentis, Secretary