

Zoom Access for Board Meeting (Board Members need to be present)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81652183448?pwd=bTqp0N5arF4XaXQ3hfeybjh8CwnOCs.1>
Meeting ID: 816 5218 3448
Passcode: 833530

**Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation District
Regular Board Meeting
October 24, 2024
8:15 am
(New SWCD Office)
611 Broadway Ave.
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.

Staff Present: Terri Peters, District Manager

*Others Present: Christina Taylor, NRCS, Frank Klennert, Citizen
Dave Copeland, BWSR*

II. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

III. AGENDA

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve The Agenda as presented.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments limited to 5 minutes per speaker

V. Katie M. Jacobson, CPA – Zoom Audit Presentation of Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Report for the Year Ended December 31, 2023.

- A. Approve Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Report/Audit for the Year Ended December 31, 2023, as presented by Katie M. Jacobson, CPA and approve for Katie M. Jacobson, CPA to send it to the State Auditor and BWSR – Board Action**

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Report for the Year Ended December 31, 2023, as presented by Katie M. Jacobson and to approve Katie M. Jacobson, CPA to send it to the State Auditor (OSA) and BWSR.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VI. 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.

- A. Silver Spirit Farm LLC Voucher payment for Contract# 2024WinLac-Wab-003 in the amount of \$1,500.00 for Practice 340 cover crops – final
(Funding source – FY24 WinLaC Partnership)**

- B. Jacob Meyer Voucher payment for Contract# 22-319WIC-1 in the amount of \$2,000.00 for Practice 340 cover crops – final year.
(Funding source – 319 Focus Small Watershed – West Indian)
- C. Jeff Wiskow Contract# 23-Capacity-3 in the amount of \$4,500.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year- Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY23 Capacity)
- D. John Eversman Contract# 23-Capacity-4 in the amount of \$1,687.50 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding sources – FY 2023 Local Capacity \$1,417.74, FY 2022 Local Capacity \$268.96, and FY 2023 Soil Heath Cost Share \$.80)
- E. Jon Harvey Contract# 23-Capacity-5 in the amount of \$4,500.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2023 Capacity)
- F. Mark Lehnertz Contract# 24-CC-7 in the amount of \$4,065.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Conservation Contracts)
- G. Mark Meyers Contract# 24-CC-8 in the amount of \$1,089.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Conservation Contracts)
- H. Cooks Valley Farm LLC Contract# 24-CC-9 in the amount of \$1,093.50 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Conservation Contracts)
- I. Bluff Valley Farm LLC Contract# 24-CC-10 in the amount of \$1,665.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Conservation Contracts)
- J. Jary Holst Contract# 24-CC-11 in the amount of \$925.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Conservation Contracts)
- K. John Eversman Contract# 23-CWF-WIC-5 in the amount of \$2,011.50 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2023 Clean Water Fund – West Indian Creek)
- L. Rachel Walkes Contract# 23-SHCS-5 in the amount of \$4,470.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding sources – FY 2023 Soil Health Cost Share \$2,749.20, FY 2023 State Cost Share \$\$1,382.80 and FY 2024 Conservation Contracts \$338.00.)
- M. Kurt Schnell Contract# 2024WAGZ-WC-16 in the amount of \$7,110.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. Two years – Install by dates 11/1/24 and 11/1/25.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))
- N. Scotch Prairie Farms LLC Contract# 2024WAGZ-WC-17 in the amount of \$4,500.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/24.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))
- O. Larry Mischke Contract# 2024WAGZ-WC-18 in the amount of \$2,925.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))
- P. Scott Sexton Contract# 2024WAGZ-WC-19 in the amount of \$1,140.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))

- Q. Scott Sexton Contract# 2024WAGZ-WC-20 in the amount of \$1,345.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY 2024 Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ))
- R. Roger Walkes Contract# 2024WinLac-Wab-007 in the amount of \$1,440.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY 2024 WinLaC Partnership)
- S. Kent Crary Contract# 20-WWDWP-14 in the amount of \$4,335.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY 2020 Whitewater Drinking Water Protection Program)
- T. Roger Walkes Contract# 20-WWDWP-18 in the amount of \$3,560.00 for Practice 340 Cover Crops. One year – Install by date 11/1/2024.
(Funding source – FY 2020 Whitewater Drinking Water Protection Program)
- U. MN Board of Water and Soil Resources Grant Amendment for 2022/2023 SWCD Programs and Operations Grant – Wabasha SWCD. To extend the 2023 – State Cost Share Fund to December 31, 2025.
- V. MN Board of Water and Soil Resources Buffer Implementation Grant Agreement – Grant ID# P25-0650 for \$20,000.00.

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

***** Dave Copeland, BWSR stated that in the future there should be separate Consent Agendas for actions on Contracts, Vouchers and Grants.***

VII. SECRETARY'S REPORT – Board Action

- A. September 26, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve The Secretary's Report as written.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VIII. TREASURER'S REPORT – Board Action

- A. September District Financial Statements
Included for your review

- B. Program Record – September

The full spreadsheet was sent to the board in advance

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

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IX. PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS

- A. Monthly Bills in the amount of \$42,718.60 - Board Action
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Payment of the Monthly Bills in the amount of \$42,718.60.
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried

X. DISTRICT REPORTS

- A. Chair Report – Lynn Zabel
Lynn reported he attended Area 7 Supervisor and Employee Fall meeting in Austin, Oct. 22nd. Chuck Rau, MASWCD President reported that Strategic Planning Funds from the State were set for \$15 million /2yrs and dropped to \$12 million. Two topics that will be discussed at the Dec. convention: "Intellectual IQ-Learn how to Work Together and Bylaw change for President's term to 4 – 2-year terms. Luther Newton, NRCS fielded questions from districts wondering why NRCS's are moving away from SWCD's. Dave Copeland stated that about 15 years ago NRCS pulled Admins away and created FPAC. They don't know the field offices of NRCS and don't know relationships with SWCDs. They are not in MN but making leasing decisions. This is not a new issue, and Troy Daniell is aware of it, but not much he can do. Terri stated that we like being down the hall from NRCS and FSA as we work on a lot of projects together. Dave said he appreciated Luther Newton's statement "We all have the same goal to provide good service to cooperators."

**(More of Dave Copelands report under Letter J – BWSR report)*

- B. County Commissioner – Bob Walkes
Attended AMC District 9 Meeting. Discussed health insurance. Wabasha did not get the highest award. Other counties have a 34% increase. Mower County is not self-insured. They partnered with a local agency and will have a 20% reduction on premiums. Wabasha works with Intellicents, who are an insurance negotiation consultant. Looking into the next couple of years and, hopefully in 2027 we will see better premiums.
- C. District Manager Report – Terri Peters
Deanna and Terri attended a meeting with Nutrient Management partners in Fillmore. Funding through MDA. Sara West will be lead technician, she has her JAA. Deanna and Amanda from Winona SWCD will have 4-part training. They will be working on the Nutrient Management workload. Priority will be Level 2 DWISMAS. Elgin, Utica and Wabasha. Outreach to townships that tested high in nitrates, over 10%. Work in Wabasha and expand into Goodhue County. Deanna training, working on spreadsheets to work with landowners. Terri going through grants to see which ones may need extension, talk to Dave. Lot of contracts coming in. Managing the grants and where the money is coming from. At Board meeting – Terri had a Grant Visual showing where they are with funding and where staff should be spending their time.

Area 7 Supervisor and Employee Meeting, October 22nd.

Meeting with Bob Walkes and talked about erosion.

Set up Zoom for Katie M Jacobson, CPA to present Audit of December 31, 2023, Financial Statements.

- D. NRCS Report – Christina Taylor – In the packet
The main focus is reaching out to landowners and gathering documents. Checking cover crops that had already been planted. Most will get paid by the end of December. Producer requests about erosion control. Bill surveying grassed waterways. Also, producers are concerned about buckthorn removal and how to keep it under control.
- E. District Technician Report- Matt Kempinger – In the packet
Matt came into meeting to answer Bob Walkes questions on report about feedlot. The new feedlot is closer to Millville. Waterway in Plainview is outlet of city storm water system behind Kwik Trip.
- F. Conservation Planning and Outreach Technician Report– Jenna Rasmusson – In the packet.
Job well done enrolling so many cover crops and crushing her cover crop goal.
- G. Natural Resources Technician Report– Katelyn Abts – In the packet
Congratulations on getting JAA in Brush Management and Windbreak Renovation /Establishment.
- H. Soil Health/Nutrient Management Tech Report – Deanna Pomije – In the packet
- I. Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant Report -Sue Cerwinske – In the packet
Good job with the auditor and getting everything they needed to them smoothly and efficiently.
- J. BWSR Report - Dave Copeland
Have had 3 Grant Compliance Specialists, one for each administrative area. Because of the number, complexity and different types of grants, they want to double the number of Grant Compliance Specialists from 3 to 6. The state requires monitoring grants with customers. Gabby Holmen was hired and toured the offices with Julie Krebbs to see how we do time tracking and grant tracking. Interviews first week of November. Vacancy for Board Conservationist. Hopefully onboard by the end of year. Depending on how BWSR adjusts work areas, should know by January if Dave will still be our Board Conservationist.
10/23 Officially informed that BWSR applied for Regional Conservation Partnership Program for Water Storage Projects. Request was for \$21 Million Federal Funds and the State will match with state funds. BWSR is 1 of 92 organizations selected by NRCS from around the country that were approved. BWSR will negotiate and work on a formal agreement with NRCS for RCPP. Sometime in 2025 the agreement should be finalized and there will be opportunities for SWCD's, Counties and Watershed Districts to utilize Fed money for financial assistance to producers on projects for water storage projects. Funds can be used for easements for wetland restorations and any practice that would retain water on the landscape.
Terri asked Dave about Soil Health Delivery Grant. Federal funds are all for financial assistance. Funds will come through BWSR, and funds are match. Should come through in the Spring and should be able to start talking to producers.

K. Other agencies –

XI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Conservation Project – Lynn (open to any Supervisor for ideas)
- B. Coffee and Conversation – follow up and next steps.
First meeting 10/21/24. Offered farmers to come in and talk with peer group and a place for mentors to answer questions. Had topics for discussion.
Lynn reported someone had brought up why Farm Safety classes aren't offered at school. Winona puts on an event. Extension office?
Volunteer alfalfa in corn to give nitrogen benefit. Next meeting is the third Wednesday morning of the month. Gave attendees a survey and a fun list of things to do.
- C. Area 7 Meeting follow-up.
Managers talked about increases in health insurance and how other SWCD's are handling it.
*** Need to jump down to New Business letter G. because of Bob Walkes time restraint and want his input.*
- D. Reminder on MASWCD Convention. Lynn, Sharleen and Terri are registered.
- E. MASWCD Resolutions – Discussion
Online ballots need to be completed by 5 pm on November 1.
Dag has done his. Sharleen and Lynn will do their own. Chet would like Sue to help with submitting his online.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Katelyn Abts has her JAA in Brush Management 314 and Windbreak Rennovation/Establishment 360. – **Board Action**
Congratulations Katelyn!
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to accept Katelyn Abt's JAA in Brush Management 314 and Windbreak Rennovation/Establishment 360.
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- B. Approve Dennis Anderson Contract# 24-CC-6 in the amount of \$744.00 for Practice 314 Brush Management – **Board Action**
(Funding source – FY24 Conservation Contracts)
Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve Dennis Anderson Contract # 24-CC-6 in the amount of \$744.00 for Practice 314 Brush Management.
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- C. Approve June E Ratz Trust Contract# 24-CC-5 in the amount of \$423.00 for Practice 314 Brush Management – **Board Action**
(Funding source – FY24 Conservation Contracts)
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve June E Ratz Trust Contract #24-CC-5 in the amount of \$423.00 for Practice 314 Brush Management.
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried

- D. Approve Hunter Farms LLC Contract# 2024WAGZ-WC-13 in the amount of \$500.00 For Woodland Stewardship Plan – **Board Action**
(Funding source – FY 2024 Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ)
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Hunter Farms LLC Contract # 2024WAGZ-WC-13 in the amount of \$500.00 for Woodland Stewardship Plan.
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- E. Annual Enrollment and Benefits - Schedule time with the Personnel Committee. Provide with options.
Terri sent Chet and Lynn some insurance information. Wabasha County Health Insurance has a 28.5% increase this year. Checked SE Coop theirs is more. PEIP slightly less, but not enough to make a switch. Dodge County goes through a private insurance company. Sent our employee census. They do cost per person and are based on age. District would have to set policy. Lynn said that he would not like to see taking away from wages. No extra money out of their pockets, retention.
Terri will go with the County option, if we can't find anything else that is less. Based on what Terri gets back from request, will send to Chet & Lynn to come to an agreement after discussing and make decision before next meeting.
- F. Authorization to move ahead with the Personnel Committee decisions, per discussion – **Board Action**
Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve moving ahead with the health insurance decision that the Personnel Committee makes for the best option.
Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel
Opposed: None
Motion Carried
- G. Discussion with County on erosion solutions – meeting held October 8.
Terri sent summary follow-up. Need to get some info from Dietrich Flesch, Wabasha County Engineer. Bob Walkes heard a conversation on Highway Dept. doing culvert cleanouts. The fields behind that used to be pastures. Cows are gone and now corn and soybeans. Can the Highway Dept and SWCD work together to identify problem areas? Terri said they talked about cost and checked in with other SWCDs. Rice County said the cost was \$100,000 to remove and used to cover landfill. Dietrich for Wabasha County estimated \$200-300 thousand just for Wabasha County and that doesn't include township roads. Outreach for specific areas and have Dietrich identify problem areas. Put maps together and cost for each site.
- H. National Association of Conservation Districts dues for 2025 - Full Membership Contribution (Gold) is \$775.00. Operational expenses that can be included in our billing rate. – **Board Action**
We have gone with \$775 for the last few years.
Goodhue manages the SE SWCD TA grant.
Valuable to area, covers some staff time. Hopefully will lower dues to SE SWCD Technical JPB.

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve the Full membership contribution (Gold) \$775.00 to the National Association of Conservation Districts dues for 2025

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

XIII. Board Reports

A. Whitewater JPB – Lynn

Lynn reported that there is a conflict with next meeting date since we moved our board meeting date up a week. Changed next meeting to December 20th at 2:00 pm.

B. Zumbro 1W1P (WAGZ)– Dag

Terri reported there was a planning work group meeting but not a policy meeting. Discussed changing policy of some payments. Figure out Extra payment for Continuous CRP.

C. WinLaC 1W1P – Lynn

D. SE SWCD Technical Support JPB - Dag

E. County Board Meeting – Sharleen

F. Upcoming Events:

- i. Tuesday – Thursday, October 29-31, 2024, BWSR Academy at Cragun's
- ii. Tuesday, November 5, 2024 Election Day
- iii. Monday, November 11, 2024 Veteran's Day – Office Closed
- iv. Thursday, November 21, 2024 Regular Board Meeting
- v. Thursday, November 28, 2024 Thanksgiving Day – Office Closed
- vi. Tree Order Forms included with the Nov/Dec Newsletter and on Website.

XIV. Adjourn – Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to Adjourn meeting at 10:16 am

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Respectively Submitted By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dag Knudsen', is written over a horizontal line.

Dag Knudsen, Secretary