



Historic Courthouse
635 2nd St SE, Milaca, MN 56353
320-983-2160
www.millelacsSWCD.org

The mission of the Mille Lacs Soil & Water Conservation District is to assist area people with soil and water resource management.

Frequently Used Acronyms:

(AgBMP) Agricultural BMP Loan Programs

(SCS) State Cost Share

(BWSR) Board of Water & Soil Resources

(CLWMP) County Local Water Mgmt Plan

(SWCD) Soil & Water Conservation District

(MASWCD) MN Assn. of Soil & Water Cons. Districts

(MLLWMG) Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt Group

(NRBG) Natural Resources Block Grant

(PFM) Private Forest Management

(LSP) Landscape Stewardship Plan

(NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service

(WCA) Wetland Conservation Act

(SRWMB) Snake River Watershed Mgmt Board

(CWF) Clean Water Fund Grant (BWSR)

(TSA 3) Technical Service Area 3

(MAWQCP) MN Ag. Water Quality Certification Program

(WPLMN) Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network

(1W1P) One Watershed, One Plan

(PTM) Priority Target Measure

MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

The meeting of the Mille Lacs Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board was held in Conference Room D at the Mille Lacs County Historic Courthouse, Milaca, Minnesota with a remote option.

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3

Vice Chair, Kurt Beckstrom, District 2

Treasurer, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Secretary, Andre LaSalle, District 4

Member, Kathy Stoeckel, District 1 (remote)

Members Absent: none

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Watershed Coordinator, Harmony Maslowski

Visitors:

Cmsr Liaison, Genny Reynolds

District 2 Candidate, Tim Braun

NRCS, Barb Zeroth

District 1 Candidate, Mark Riverblood

1. **Call to Order** Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6:01pm
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance
2. **Conflict of Interest Disclosure – Verbal**
Hoefert – No Conflict
Beckstrom – No Conflict
Lasalle – No Conflict
Janski – No Conflict
Stoeckel – No Conflict
3. **Motion by Beckstrom to approve the agenda a presented;** LaSalle second. Affirmative: Stoeckel, Hoefert, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: none. The motion carried.

- Additions: 9.v Personnel cmte report, 8.c. S.E.H. invoice, 7g. MDA grant authorization
 - Deletions: none
4. **Motion by Beckstrom to approve the consent agenda as presented; Hoefert second. Stoeckel, Hoefert, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: none. The motion carried.**
- a. Approve August 12, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. Approve Monthly Financial Report
 - i. Treasurer's Report
 - ii. Checks written #7607 - #7625 and electronic transfer's #e20-065 - #e20-073 totaling \$37,356.87.
 - c. Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases
 - d. Approve authorized project payment for contract FY18-6 to seal a well for John Dunham in an amount not to exceed \$192.50 or 50% of the est. cost of \$385.00 to be paid from P18-7580 SCS FY18 grant.
5. **Open Public Forum: No public comment.**
6. **Staff Reports/Presentations**
- a. Staff Presentation – Harmony Maslowski provided updates on the work she has been leading under the Clean Water Fund grant to create her Mille Lacs Lake Watershed and Upper Rum River Watershed Coordinator position: Compass lakeshore stewardship outreach, Healthy Land Healthy Lake event. Snake River 1w1p Advisory and public input is progressing well. WPLMN water sampling is wrapping up for this season, working behind the scenes to do the invoicing, budgeting and contract development for next season.
 - b. Administrator's Report –
 - Ms. Shaw reported the new laptops have been received and are being set up for remote work.
 - BWSR Academy will be available for staff annual training remotely in October.
 - MLC will be hosting the Operation Community Connect as a drive through event this year, Shaw will ask staff to consider what those community members might need from the SWCD to see how we should participate.
 - Covid business plan may be updated soon with details for exposure reporting.
 - The District has received open enrollment for employee health insurance, Shaw will review, deadline is typically about Nov 1. Reminder to turn in supervisor expense sheets following tonight's meeting.
 - Last month the board was asked if you had a preference for remote meeting platform, Shaw would like purchase/register for an account for GoTo meeting. The board requested the Administrator check for substantial differences in cost between platforms.
Motion by Beckstrom to authorize purchase of a virtual meeting account upon satisfactory testing by the chair and administrator; LaSalle second. Stoeckel, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: Hoefert. The motion carried.
7. **District Policy, Planning, Activities, Projects, & Grants**
- a. District Work Plan Check In on Progress – Shaw reviewed the progress reporting.

- b. Minnesota DEED/Career Force Center Internship Opportunity – Janski suggested the Administrator indicate to DEED that there may be additional opportunities with the SWCD for interns.
Motion by Hoefert to accept the intern; Stoeckel second. Stoeckel, Hoefert, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- c. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P)
 - i. Rum River – Consultant plan writer changes. Mr. Janski reported there was a second consultant plan writer disruption to the project. The partnership is working on re-contracting and hoping to work out an arrangement that will not slow the project. Organizational agreements – There are split preferences among the planning partner boards. Issue tabled from the last meeting and to be revisited in September. Beckstrom emphasized he feels it's important that the implementation framework prevent progress being stalled in the event one partner fails to take action.
 - ii. Snake River – Beckstrom will participate as an observer for the upcoming TAC meeting.
- d. Board Self-Evaluation: Mr. Janski asked for feedback from members about Section D – Performance of Individual Board Members. This part of the evaluation is meant as an opportunity for self-reflection. Janski invited members to share their thoughts. Feedback suggested the exercise was meaningful, but to consider other formats such as a one-time concise review annually.
- e. CWF Grant Application Submitted - Drinking Water Restoration and Preservation – Harnessing the Power of the Forest to Buffer and Infiltrate in the Rum River Watershed
- f. MPCA WPLMN Water Sampling Contract – **Motion by Beckstrom to authorize the Administrator to execute the contract;** LaSalle second. Stoeckel, Hoefert, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- g. MDA Noxious Weed grant – **Motion by Stoeckel to authorize the Administrator to apply for the grant in conjunction with Mille Lacs county;** Hoefert second. Stoeckel, Hoefert, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

8. Financials

- a. Stoeckel approved the statement audit
- b. Admin. Assistant Resignation – Ms. Shaw and the Personnel committee recommended not to rehire immediately due to uncertainty with state funding. Instead the Administrator will work with staff and the personnel committee to restructure the work. The Administrator will investigate options such as contracting some fiscal work out to create the separation of duties needed to prevent fraud.
- c. Approve payment to S.E.H. in the amount of \$2,664.12 per the SWCD contract with S.E.H., Wahkon and the SWCD under BWSR CWF grant ID-C19-2703.
Motion by Hoefert to approve payment; LaSalle second. Stoeckel, Hoefert, Beckstrom, LaSalle. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

9. Informational Updates

- a. Watersheds, Workgroups
 - i. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski) – Healthy land healthy lake event was a success.
 - ii. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom) – the planning project is going smoothly
 - iii. 1W1P Rum River Policy Meeting (Janski) – discussed earlier

- iv. 1W1P Snake River Policy Meeting (Beckstrom) – discussed earlier
- v. Personnel Cmte (Janski, LaSalle) – LaSalle reported the committee (Janski & LaSalle) provided an exit interview for the Admin Assit to offer her an opportunity to provide parting thoughts about her time with the district. Grievances were shared about how things were being handled. The Cmte followed up with Administrator to see what the District could learn from the grievances shared. The personnel cmte does not feel there are any unresolved issues. Additionally, a request was made that 100% accrued annual leave be paid in full per the current policy, as well a request that the board consider payout for 130.5 hrs accrued sick leave (not policy). The personnel cmte discussed the rationale for the request and do not feel there is justification to alter the current policy to fulfil the request. The request would require a change in district policy. The committee tried to consider the request from the perspective of the admin asst as well as what the boards perspective may be. In the end the committee did not feel they could recommend the action.

10. Meetings & Events

- a. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/Hoefert).....Sept. 21 @ 10am, Remote
Janski will attend
- b. SWCD Forestry (LaSalle, Janski/Beckstrom)Sept. 17 @ 10:00, Remote
LaSalle will attend
- c. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom, Hoefert)TBD Sept. 28 @ 9:00, Remote
Beckstrom will attend if held
- d. TSA Area 3 (Hoefert, LaSalle)Sept. 23 @ 10:00, Remote
Hoefert will attend
- e. 1W1P Rum River Policy Committee (Janski, Beckstrom).....Sept. 24 @ 5:00, Remote
Janski will attend
- f. 1W1P Snake River Policy Committee (Beckstrom, Hoefert) TBD Sept. 28 @ 10:30, Remote
Beckstrom will attend
- g. Outreach/Education (Janski & LaSalle; Beckstrom)TBD Sept (next 2 weeks) Remote test GoTo
- h. One on One Meetings
- i. 1W1P Snake River liaison to Advisory Cmte (Beckstrom, Hoefert).....Sept. 10 @ 10:30, Remote
Beckstrom will attend

Motion by Hoefert to approve meetings and events, Beckstrom second. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Stoeckel. Opposed: none. The motion carried.

11. Supervisor Updates

Hoefert reported the Area 3 director is not running for office again. All officer positons are open. Nominations for all officer positions need to be submitted by end of September. The board asked Shaw to notify Deanna Pomije with Kanabec SWCD that the MLSWCD submits three nominations for officers: Beckstrom as Director, Hoefert as Secretary, and Janski as co-director.

Janski reported MASWCD held a resolutions cmte meeting and 21 resolutions will be forwarded to the MASWCD board. Expect the ballot for local voting will be provided in October.

Beckstrom provided NACD updates on committee nominations and 2021 grant opportunities.

Hoefert – Clean Water Council had their meeting and discussed funding for SWCDs. There is no interest in funding SWCDs through the Clean Water Fund. Hoefert raised concerns because there is no funding set aside in the state general budget for SWCDs.

12. Evaluate the Meeting:

a. Was the meeting effective in moving the district work plan goals forward?

13. Next Regular Meeting – Wednesday, October 14, 2020, 6:00pm, Historic Courthouse, Conference Room D/remote.

14. Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 8:12pm.



Andre LaSalle, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary
Jake Janski, Alternate

10-14-20

Date

