



Who we are as an organization – Mille Lacs SWCD is applying a civic governance approach to SWCD actions and activities. The work of the SWCD and the outcomes of its activities will produce a base of active citizens with common interest in sustainable soil & water conservation. All stakeholders are committed to organize, educate, and apply policy according to principles and standards instituted in democracy.

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
(CAI) County Agricultural Inspector

(NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service
(WCA) Wetland Conservation Act
(SRWMB) Snake River Watershed Mgmt Board
(CWF) Clean Water Fund
(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
(JAA) Job Approval Authority

Mille Lacs SWCD Board Meeting – MINUTES
Wednesday, September 8, 2021

Mille Lacs County Historic Courthouse, Conference Room D with remote option for the public.

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3
Vice Chair, Kurt Beckstrom, District 2
Treasurer, Robert Hoefert, District 5
Secretary, Andre LaSalle, District 4
Member, Dan Campbell, District 1

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw
Watershed Coordinator, Harmony Maslowski

Visitors:

Commissioner Liaison, Genny Reynolds
NRCS, Barb Zeroth

Members Absent: none

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance– Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

1. **Conflict of Interest Declaration** – Supervisors were requested to identify any real or perceived conflicts of interest they may have regarding meeting business. The conflict-of-interest declaration form was provided to each for signature.
2. **Approval of Agenda** – (additions and deletions of new business or committee reports)
 - additions - none
 - deletions - none

Motion by Hoefert to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Beckstrom. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

3. **Open Public Forum** - Board policy limits public forum time for board meeting topics not scheduled within the agenda to 10 minutes, but allows time extension by vote.

Cmsr Reynolds reported a county board liaison may not be able to attend SWCD meetings beginning 2022 in order to reduce county per diems. At this time the SWCD plans to continue hosting meetings with a remote option in order to allow any member of the public to view the meetings. This may provide an additional option for a Cmsr liaison to keep abreast of SWCD activities.

Barb Zeroth provided an update on NCRS programs and signup periods.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve **July 14** and **August 11, 2021** Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Approve **July** Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E21-137- E21-159 and checks written #7769-7775, totaling \$30,730.33.
- c. Approve **August** Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E21-160- E21-178 and checks written #7776-7782, totaling \$36,545.89.
- d. Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases
- e. Administrators leave request Sept 21-24

Motion by LaSalle to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

5. Staff Reports/Presentations

- a. SWCD staff chat – Harmony Maslowski, Watershed Organizer/Coordinator, gave an overview of the water quality monitoring program and answered questions. Ms. Maslowski noted that the data produced from her sampling work is used to compile trend data on 10-year intervals. The water quality data she reviewed is accessible to the public on the MPCA website.

- b. Administrators Report - Shaw reported that two articles were submitted for the MLC newsletter. 1) Agriculture and Clean Water, City of Wahkon completes Stormwater Management Plan.

BWSR Academy annual staff training will be done remotely again in 2021 with no registration fee.

Shaw noted that work plan progress reports were not bound together as a separate item on the agenda, but instead each progress report is associated with the specific agenda item to which it relates. As the board and public review the materials in preparation for meetings, all will find out what's new from the report. That allows us to jump straight to the discussion and questions at the meeting.

6. District Policy, Planning, Activities, Projects, Grants

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates
 - i. Rum River – 1W1P Policy Cmte RUM River (Janski/Campbell)
Janski reported that he is reviewing the draft plan and providing comments. He is estimating he will have committed approximately 7 hours to the effort by the time he completes his review. Comments are due by September 13th.
 - ii. Snake River – Management Board/CAC & 1W1P Policy Cmte SNAKE River (Beckstrom/Hoefert)
Beckstrom and Maslowski noted there is a Snake 1w1p news and updates page on the Mille Lacs SWCD website. The next meeting may be an overlapping or joint meeting of the Snake Mgmt Board and Snake 1w1p Policy Cmte to allow for a merged discussion of the future organizational agreement options.
 - iii. Mississippi St. Cloud/Sartell (Maslowski)
The Mississippi St. Cloud has been awarded a 1w1p planning grant. The Mille Lacs SWCD plans to have a small role in this planning process.
- b. Area3/MASWCD Business
 - i. MASWCD Award nominations due Sept 17
Motion by Beckstrom to approve nomination of the Rum River Longbeards local chapter NWTFF as the outstanding conservationists of the year. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - ii. Fall Area 3 meeting registration – meeting will be September 21st at the Blackwoods in Proctor. There will be an in-person tour. Driving separately will not be an option due to parking constraints. Janski and Beckstrom plan to attend. Hoefert will attend if he is able.
Motion by Campbell to approve Janski, Beckstrom and Hoefert to represent MLSWCD at the Area 3 annual meeting and tour. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- c. FY22-23 SWCD Program & Operations biennial grant agreement - Includes State Cost Share and Conservation Delivery funds
Motion by Beckstrom to approve signature of the FY22-23 SWCD Program & Operations biennial grant agreement. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- i. State Cost Share – Technical Assistance Option Request
 Shaw explained the board has the option to request authorization from BWSR to the use of the entire FY22 and FY23 State Cost Share Funds for technical and administrative expenses. This will allow the SWCD to support direct outreach and staff conversations with landowners done onsite to review their water quality improvement needs, discuss goals and develop interest and buy-in for the installation of BMP projects. This will also enable the SWCD to provide additional technical assistance to landowners to facilitate implementation of State Cost Share or EQIP eligible conservation practices that will leverage Federal EQIP and/or watershed district funds for project installation.
- Motion by Beckstrom to approve submitting a request to BWSR to use the entire FY22 State Cost Share Funds for technical and administrative expenses.** Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- Motion by Hoefert to approve submitting a request to BWSR to use the entire FY23 State Cost Share Funds for technical and administrative expenses.** Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- d. Milaca High School student internship – begins Sept 13
 Shaw reported that she is exploring how this could be effective for both the student and the SWCD if done remotely.
- e. No-Till/Interseeder equipment rental
 With a vacancy in the SWCD Ag Technician role, remaining staff are not able to take on the additional role of oversight and maintenance of the no-till drills. Beckstrom reported he reached out to the Soil Service Assn and Foreston Coop Creamery and they were not interested in renting equipment that is not their own. Shaw reached out to Benton and Kanabec SWCDs and they do not have the staff available to oversee rental of MLSWCD equipment.
- As an interim plan to finish the planting season, Beckstrom volunteered to oversee equipment operation, maintenance, and review safe operation practices with renters. Shaw will oversee the contracts and rental payments. The board agreed to consider each contracted rental of the Interseeder as a district meeting and compensate Kurt at the \$50 per-diem rate per rental.
- Shaw and LaSalle will review the current rental rates and compare with actual cost and recommendations provided by Casey Field before he resigned. Shaw has board authorization to adjust rental rates for the remainder of the year, done in consultation with LaSalle. Shaw will share adjusted rates with the board at the next meeting.
- f. Temporary officer appointments - not needed as Hoefert is planning to fill out the remainder of the year in his role as Treasurer.

7. Financials

- a. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) – LaSalle reconciled the August bank statement with the QuickBooks accounting system prior to the meeting and reported that everything reconciled.
- b. Treasurers report/budget update – Shaw met with the MLC board for two budget discussions to cover the spectrum of impacts related to any budget cuts to the SWCD. Wetland Conservation Act duties are mandatory. County ag inspector duties and implementation of the local water management plan are delegated roles and would need to be done by MLC staff if not by the SWCD. Shaw recommends holding off on hiring decisions until we hear from MCL regarding funding. MLC should provide insight on draft budget decisions by the end of September.

- c. Annual financial audit yr-end 2020
Motion by LaSalle to sign and approve the management representation letter. Second by Beckstrom.
 Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

8. Informational Updates

- a. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. Technical Service Area 3 (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle)
 Janski reported that he will be in attendance at the Healthy Land, Healthy Lake EXPO on Saturday, September 18, 9:00 – noon at McQuoid’s Inn. Shaw will attend as part of the Compass roundtable discussion.
 - iii. Forestry Association (LaSalle/Janski)
 - iv. Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (LaSalle/Janski)

9. Approved (August & September) SWCD Meetings & Events - Motion by LaSalle to approve supervisor attendance/reimbursement for the following meetings. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- a. 1W1P Rum River Policy Committee (Janski/Beckstrom) Sept 23 @ 5:00, in-person
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert) Aug 16 @ 9:00, remote/tbd
 Merged SRWMB/CAC/1W1P Policy Committee meeting.....Sept 27 @ 9:00, tbd
- c. 1W1P Snake River TAC (Beckstrom as PC liaison) Sept 9 @ 1:30, remote
- d. TSA Area 3 (Hoefert/LaSalle) Sept 22 @ 10:00, Duluth/Hybrid
- e. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle) Aug 16 @ 10:00, in-person
- f. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Janski)Sept 16 @ 10:00, tour of UPM Blandin Paper & mtg
- f. Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (LaSalle/Janski) no meeting
- g. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) monthly
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed
 - vi. Interseeder meetings (per rental contract) (Beckstrom) as needed
 - vii. Area 3 annual meeting (Beckstrom, Janski, Hoefert plan to attend)Sept 21, Proctor/in-person


10. Supervisor Updates

Beckstrom will be attending the state NACD meeting.

11. Evaluate the Meeting – Janski found the new process of providing progress reports as information tied to agenda action items to be helpful.

12. Next Regular Meeting – October 13, 2021 - 6PM, Historic Courthouse, conference room D. A remote option will continue to be offered for presenters and the public. Board members will meet in person.

13. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:45PM



 Andre LaSalle, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary

10-13-21

 Date

Our specific purpose or vision is to organize more sustainable partnership between government and community, by developing and supporting an active role for all citizens in managing soil & water resources, that will ensure soil and water resources can meet the needs and the common good of all citizens.