



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, August 17, 2022

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, Andre LaSalle, District 4

Secretary, Dan Campbell, District 1

Member, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Participating Guests:

NRCS, Barb Zeroth

Shoreland Tech, Lynn Gallice

Members Absent: none

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6: 01PM

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

Motion by Beckstrom to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Campbell. 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.

Barb Zeroth was hoping to introduce the acting NRCS Team Lead to the board but he was unable to attend. She also shared that there is a soil health field day being hosted in Rush City.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Approve July 13, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

b. Approve Monthly Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E22-131- E22-146 and checks written #7872-7881, totaling \$56,488.65.

c. Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases

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

5. Staff Reports/Presentations

- a. Administrators Report - Shaw reported the Isanti SWCD will begin buffer compliance checks on behalf of the Mille Lacs SWCD in area three (3) as defined in our policy. This area includes Milaca, Borgholm, Milo, Bogus Brook, Greenbush and Princeton twps. Isanti technician Matthew Remer attempt to draw compliance conclusions by reviewing buffers using the imagery from the BuffCAT application and Mille Lacs county GIS maps. If he can't draw a conclusion with the imagery on the BuffCAT app a site visit will be needed. The compliance policy also requires up to 50 random checks in areas other than the area targeted for this year.

Shaw also asked the Outreach committee (Beckstrom/Campbell) for input on articles drafted for the fall issue of the Mille Lacs County Newsletter. The articles to be submitter are about the MLSWCD drinking water grant project and a reprint of an MPCA and Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group article about keeping lead tackle out of the water.

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

- a. Conservation Recognition/Award nomination (Outreach Cmte/Lynn)..... (action)
Lynn shared some suggestions for outstanding conservationist, both were considered because of their leadership in the Compass lake stewardship program.

Motion by Beckstrom to recognize Margaret Voss for her leadership roles taken by working in the community to encourage others to get involved in water quality protection. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- b. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates
 - i. Rum River Watershed Partnership updates..... (Janski/Beckstrom)

The new JPE implementation organizational board had their first meeting at which they elected Janski as chair, approved bylaws and reviewed timelines and next steps. Mille Lacs, Crow Wing and Kanabec counties decided not to become part of the JPE. Within the bylaws the board decided to allow ex officio membership of anyone who has approved the plan but chosen not to join the JPE.

The board is struggling to find a JPE attorney. None of the county attorneys were comfortable representing the group due to perceived conflicts of interest. At the next meeting the board will be reviewing proposals from attorneys and review the proposed annual work plan.

Janski has been asked to give an overview of the entire plan at the Healthy Land Healthy Lake event.

- ii. Snake River – Management Board/CAC & 1W1P Policy Cmte..... (Shaw/Beckstrom/Hoefert)

- 1. Draft Comprehensive Water Mgmt Plan – opportunity to comment during the 90-day agency review period. Consider the narrative under section 2.3 Land Use & Socioeconomics in the Land & Water Resource Narrative p.2.6..... (discussion)

Beckstrom described recent events with draft plan as a major step sideways or backward. **The plan was released for 90-day state agency comment with no mention of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (MLBO) as a jurisdiction in the watershed.**

At the June 27th Snake policy board meeting the suggestion was make by some Cmrs to strike paragraphs in the plans land and water resource narrative that mentioned the MLBO as a jurisdiction in the snake watershed. Beckstrom had chaired the meeting and suggested a more equitable action would be to leave sentences that acknowledged the MLBO but only strike language that described its formation and governing boundaries. There was no similar language about how counties were formed and no language was needed to describe county or municipality boundaries either.

Additionally, there is disagreement about the final action taken by the Snake policy board. Beckstrom and Shaw recollected that the action was to leave two sentences in the plan which

read 'Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe land in the watershed consists of reservation, trust, and fee simple land. Trust land is used for multiple purposes and is important to tribal natural resource, economic, and environmental programs.' However, the draft minutes of that meeting reflect that sentence being removed.

Because there is no mention of the MLBO in the draft Snake River Comprehensive Watershed Management plan, Shaw asked the SWCD board if they would like to comment under the 90-day notice period.

Motion by Beckstrom to approve public comment be made that the Mille Lacs SWCD Board would like to see the language Beckstrom believes was agreed upon at the Snake River Watershed Policy Committee on June 27, 2002 meeting be reinserted into the plan. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

Additionally, Cmsr Smith from Kanabec and Cmsr Oslin from Mille Lacs counties decided to vote no if the SWCD elected officials are given an equal vote in any future comprehensive watershed board. In order to discuss this point the Cmsr's hired John Kolb of Rinkey Noonan to give a presentation August 22nd to the Snake watershed planning board on "the good and bad of JPE's."

- iii. Mississippi St. Cloud / Sartell – 1W1P Policy Cmte (Shaw/Campbell/Hoefert)
 - 1. Review petition to proceed without the CRWD as a partner (action)
 - 2. Potentially may need to re-sign the MRSC 1w1p planning partnership MOA..... (action)

Motion by Beckstrom to approve with the petition to proceed with the planning process without the Clearwater River Watershed District (CRWD), and to authorize re-signature of the MOA if it needs to be rewritten striking the CRWD as a planning partner. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- c. Forestry LCCMR grant – awarded (info)

BWSR has been awarded a 3M LCCMR grant for reforestation on a watershed scale. This pilot project is the first of a multi-step strategy towards reaching the 1-million-acre reforestation goal initially recommended by Minnesota Climate Change Advisory Group (MCCAG) in 2009 and now by TNC and others. It brings together 14 SWCDs and the Mille Lacs Band with BWSR's RIM easement program and DNR Forestry's Private Forest Management (PFM) Program to significantly expand the capacity of tree planting to private landowners in three priority watersheds – Rum, Long Prairie and Redeye. These watersheds are in the transitional zone of the state, where some of the most significant losses of historic forestland cover occurred. Each of these watersheds has a landscape stewardship plan and a 1W1P in place. MLSWCD will coordinate activities among partners in the Rum watershed.

- d. Area3/MASWCD Business
 - i. Call for nominations for MASWCD President & Vice President (info)

Beckstrom is working with Leanne Buck, MASWCD Exec Director to pull together the agenda and topics for the Sept 9 fall Area 3 meeting. Topic will include a roundtable about next steps for 1w1p and the challenge of implementation. Lindberg Ekola will speak about the LCCMR tree planting grant.

- e. Personnel committee report
 - i. Staff mid-year review outcomes (info)

The personnel committee met with both Shaw and Gallice individually. The committee feels its good practice to get staff feedback on managing how the civic governance pilot is working as well as the overall workload. Staff feedback is they appreciate meeting with the personnel committee and its for employee morale. The also committee helped draft interview questions.

The committee recognizes of the challenges of limited staff capacity. Shaw shared a "shoot for the moon budget" which was provided to MLC and found it helpful to see the vision for the SWCD in the future (strategic planning).

- ii. Financial specialist hiring update(action)
Interviews were held on Monday, August 15. Shaw, LaSalle and MLC Human Resources Manager participated in the interview of several candidates and proceeded to make offer to the most qualified person as a grade J, step 7 @\$26.89/hr, pending reference checks. Her start date would be Sept 7th.
Motion by Beckstrom to approve the hire of Stephanie Souer for the Financial Specialist position starting as a grade J, step 7 @\$26.89/hr, pending reference checks. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

7. Financials

- a. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) – LaSalle reconciled the July 2022 bank statement with the QuickBooks accounting system.
- b. Financial Update – Shaw reported that she met with the Mille Lacs County board in work session August 16th to review the “shoot for the moon” budget provided that outlined long term staff capacity goals for the SWCD, grant funding opportunities and gaps to meeting those goals. Shaw asked for at least an equivalent cost of living increase that mirrored what MLC will do within its own budget for employees and operations. Shaw described having partial state grant funding to hire an Ag Tech and challenged the county board to consider an allocation increase that would meet the gap in funding needed to fully hire an Ag tech. The discussion with Cmsr was constructive and feedback was positive.
- c. SRW 1W1P Planning Grant P20-9953 fiscal expenditures to be reimbursed:
Motion by Beckstrom to approve payment to Stantec in the amount of \$2,325.00 for period June 18- July 15, 2022, INV#1959827 under the SRW 1w1p grant P20-9953. Second by LaSalle Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- d. Billable rate update (action)
Motion by Hoefert to approve policy 2022-03 to update the billable rate effective July 1, 2022. 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 (LaSalle/Hoefert)
Beckstrom reported TSA’s were created in 1994 under a plan. BWSR is looking at that plan to update to work better with 1w1ps.
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle)
Sept 17 is the Healthy Land Healthy Lake event planned at McQuoid’s 9-noon. Activities include an online plant sale (preorder) and an invite has been sent to elected officials.
 - iii. Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell)
LaSalle did not go to tour but listened to the meeting. LCCMR tree grant was the big report.
 - iv. Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (LaSalle/Beckstrom)

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

- a. 1W1P Rum River Policy Committee (Janski/Beckstrom).....Aug 25@ 5:00,-**Sept 22 at 4:30**
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (**both Beckstrom/Hoefert**) canceled Aug 22 @ 9:00
1W1P Snake River Policy Committee Aug 22 @ 10:30

1W1P Snake River Policy Committee Sept 26 @ 10:30
1W1P Snake River Public Hearing.....Sept 20 Kanabec County
- c. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) TBD
- d. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Sept 28 @ 10:00
- e. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle)..... Aug 15 @ 10:00, remote

- i. Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Expo Sept 17 @ McQuoid's Inn
- f. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) Sept 15 @ 10:00, Location TBD/remote option
- g. Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (LaSalle/Beckstrom)TBD
- h. Area 3 fall meeting (**Janski, Beckstrom, Hoefert**)Sept 8-9
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle).....monthly
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Hiring/interviews (**LaSalle**)..... August 15
 - 2. Mid-point personnel reviews (**Janski/LaSalle**) July 19
 - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed

10. Supervisor Updates

LaSalle attended a field day in Pine county that went well. Would like to have on in ML county.

Beckstrom shared a flier for the Benton SWCD & NRCS tour

MASWCD plans to share the same legislative platform with new legislators. Suggested we contact our candidates and current legislators on the stuff we do.

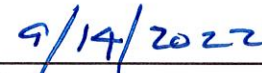
11. Evaluate the Meeting – no comments

12. Next Regular Meeting – September 14, 2022 - 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 7:45 PM



 Dan Campbell, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary



 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.

