



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, February 8, 2023

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

Members Absent: none

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Financial Specialist, Stephanie Souer

Participating Guests:

NRCS District Conservationist, Barb Zeroth

BWSR Board Conservationist, Darren Mayers

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6:00 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 - _____
 - deletions - _____

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

Darren Mayers, BWSR Board Conservationist, attended to report on the 2023 BWSR Legislative Priorities and funding proposed for conservation. Federal funding should be available in upcoming years as well.

4. Consent Agenda

- Approve January 11, 2023 Organizational Meeting Minutes
- Approve Monthly Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E23-001 – E23-020, Credit Card Transaction Fee Batch (7 total), and checks written #7927 - #7938 totaling \$50,434.08.

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

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

5. NRCS/SWCD Memorandum of Understanding, Civil Rights Responsibilities and Acknowledgment of Section 1619 compliance

Barb Zeroth reminded the board of the MOU, civil rights and equal opportunity responsibilities and 1619 compliance expectations. NRCS and SWCD staff will be working together to assist landowners with projects. Ms. Zeroth will plan to provide a form to landowners to sign giving staff the option to share their project information at board meetings.

Motion by Beckstrom to acknowledged the importance and requirement to follow the civil rights procedures and sign the appropriate documents. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

The NRCS Local Work Group public input meeting should be held before July 14 this year. Barb and Susan will work together to get producer input throughout the year so that producers do not have to attend for their input to be considered. NRCS will explore hosting the meeting in conjunction with the Kanabec office again this year.

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

a. Financials

i. Financial Update

Ms. Souer provided an overview of the district profit and loss budgeted vs actual for January. This report will be provided cumulatively each month. Beckstrom commented that he liked the format.

ii. Treasurers report was provided.

iii. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) - LaSalle reconciled the bank statement with the QuickBooks accounting system. He reported that everything looks good, noting there is more itemization for credit cards and fees.

b. Peterson Company Audit Engagement Letter

The amount for services has increased from last year but within our budget.

Motion by LaSalle to engage Peterson Company Ltd for audit fiscal year ending Dec 31, 2022 in the amount of \$3,500. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

c. SWCD Treasurer’s Training offered by BWSR to review the role of the SWCD treasurer, SWCD funding structures, incorporating plans into the district budget and tools for treasurers. LaSalle (Treasurer) and Souer (Financial Specialist) will attend.

d. Fee schedule **(action)**

Souer analysis of 2022 time, effort and rental rates for the no-till drills and concluded the district was still losing money even having increased rates last season. Souer proposed an increase to the rental rate assuming similar use of the equipment. Beckstrom referenced the Iowa custom rates survey for no-till drills and suggested we increase the rate to \$21/acre for the larger drill. We need to be able to save money from rental into an account to be able to replace the equipment.

Motion by Beckstrom to set the Truax rental rate at \$21/acre and the Tye at \$15/acre or \$112 minimum. Amended by Hoefert to increase the minimum charge for the Truax to \$210. Second by Hoefert. Discussion about the rationale for the damage deposit. Shaw was uncertain why \$500 was set for the Truax and none for the Tye. Shaw and Souer can research. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

e. Billable rates should be updated annually or any time staff or expenses significantly change. A 12 month look back of actual expenses is used. Administrator \$89.11/hr, Financial Specialist \$62.02, Shoreland Tech \$75.73.

Motion by LaSalle to adopt the new billable rates as of January 1, 2023. Second by Beckstrom. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

f. SWCD fee for service proposal was shared depicting rates based on the particular employee/position providing a fee for service. This is proposed instead of a flat rate that would be equalized across staff. The rate relative to employee would significantly decrease administrative cost for grant reporting. Darren Mayers shared that the Crow Wing SWCD has used the fee for service to bill grants instead of clients. Additional research and discussion is needed. The board would like to keep this topic as a full board discussion on the March agenda.

g. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates

i. Rum River Watershed Partnership JPE Board Janski
First meeting of the year was held at which the board finalized policy details, approved the grant agreement, two partner subcontracts and the meeting schedule for the year. Jake will continue as Chair. The Implementation Policy Committee meetings will meet to review the project applications and outreach plan.

ii. Snake River Watershed 1W1P Policy Cmte Beckstrom
Beckstrom reported on the last policy meeting. The JPE draft agreement was not brought up for action. Shaw will meet with BWSR reps and Beckstrom to review the options and steps carefully as we proceed with decision making. Next steps are to act locally on approving the plan and later the JPE.

1. SRW 1W1P Planning Grant P20-9953 fiscal expenditures to be reimbursed:

a. Internal work plan budget move: Steph explained request to move the last 10% internally. After additional discussion with the Snake team (specifically Deanna), staff determined that there will be additional costs associated with finalizing the grant. Staff and BWSR are all in agreement that we want to spend all available funds, including the contingency funds. Our 10% allowable total is \$27,621. We have moved a total of \$18,339 between Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and our consultant Stantec. We have a remaining \$9,282 that we are allowed to move without additional amendments. Souer is proposing the following with MLSWCD Board approval: Move \$5,000 to Kanabec Plan Development from Contingency, \$2,282 to Kanabec Admin/Coordination from Contingency, and \$2,000 to Mille Lacs Admin/Coordination from Contingency. Darren simply needs and email documenting this and it will be approved.

b. Stantec - \$1,075 for work done Nov 19-December 9, 2022 and \$812.50 for work done December 10-Jan 13, 2023.

c. Kanabec SWCD - \$7,739.13 for work done 10/31/22-12/31/22.

Motion by Beckstrom to approve the 10% internal grant work plan budget amendment, payment to Stantec in the amounts of \$1,075.00 and \$812.50 and Kanabec SWCD in the amount of \$7,739.13 under the SRW 1w1p grant P20-9953. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

iii. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Cmte Campbell
Policy Cmte members are struggling to set a regular date.

1. Nominate a Citizen Advisory Committee representative – Shaw has identified a community member with the watershed who is interested in an advisory roll in the planning process. Jim Beck is a farmer and Greenbush township supervisor.

Motion by LaSalle to nominate Jim Beck as a citizen advisory rep to the Mississippi St. Cloud watershed planning process. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

h. Tree Sale update Souer
The district is sold out of several species and sales appear to be on track with other years. Credit card use is happening when people ask. People do ask if there is a fee for credit use. Overall, it's a positive response from the public. Only one person mentioned tree sale price in negative way, no other comments.

- i. LCCMR Tree Planting Grant agreement (P23-2942)
Motion by LaSalle to approve signature of the LCCMR Tree Planting Grant agreement (P23-2942).
 Second by Beckstrom. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- j. Central Mille Lacs county targeted well sealing grant (C23-6045)
Motion by Beckstrom to approve signature of the Central Mille Lacs county targeted well sealing grant (C23-6045) Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- k. Employee and supervisor handbook policy changes – per January action
Motion by Janski to update the policy handbook to show that the SWCD will follow Mille Lacs County policy for paid holidays. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

Motion by Beckstrom to sign the resolution showing the updates to the handbook. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- l. Civic Governance Strategic planning progress report and next steps
 Shaw updated the board on the steps being taken internally with staff and committee members as part of strategic planning. The goal is to review strategic goals at the March meeting. In preparation Shaw asked board members to reflect on district activities and consider “how do these activities or goals impact the common good?”
- m. Area3/MASWCD Business
 - i. Legislative Briefing and Reception and SWCD Day at the Capitol (\$100/person registration, rooms \$143.65 tax excluded) Beckstrom plans to attend and the board encouraged everyone who can attend to do so and let Shaw or Souer know by March 1.

7. Informational Updates

- a. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. Snake River Watershed Management Board - Citizen Advisory CommitteeBeckstrom (Hoefert)
 - ii. Technical Service Area 3 LaSalle
 TSA plans to purchase a \$41,000 surveying tool. BWSR provided an overview of the role on the TSA Board. Engineering staff gave a presentation recapping projects in the area.
 - iii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group Janski
 Still trying to bridge the gap between what they are doing and the Rum plan. Shaw will attend in March to provide input on roles for implementation. Keep it clean campaign and lunch and learns being planned. Janski and Shaw are preparing questions to ask of the group to clarify roles and find out what they want to do.
 - iv. Forestry Association LaSalle (Campbell)
 Discussion about setting up a standardized rate for plans in order to avoid competition with private foresters. Campbell attended the meeting virtually.

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

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Beckstrom).....Mar 23 @ 4:30
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert) TBD/Feb 27 @ 9:00
 1W1P Snake River Policy CommitteeFeb 27 @ 10:30
- c. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) TBD
- d. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) June 28 @ 10:00
- e. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle) March 20 @ 10:00, remote
- f. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell)Mar 16 @ 10:00, Location TBD

- g. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle)..... monthly
 - 2. Treasures Training March 24 @ 9:30-noon, Anoka
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Civic Governance/strategic next steps..... TBD
 - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell) Feb to prepare for cropping season
 - iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)
 - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed
- h. MASWCD legislative briefing & day at Capitol (anyone who chooses to attend) March 7-8

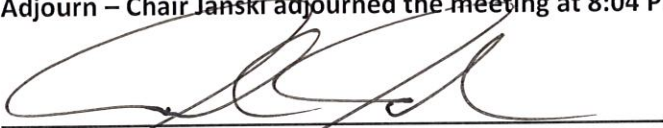
9. Supervisor Updates

The resolution to reclassify rough fish has an actual bill SF188 to fund the DNR to reexamine that. Janski sent info on the bill to our state senator to ask to support.

10. Evaluate the Meeting – the board like the format of combining finance and business

11. Next Regular Meeting – Thursday, March 9 - 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.

12. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM



 Dan Campbell, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary
 Jake Janski Chair

3/9/23

 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.

