



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, January 11, 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

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Financial Specialist, Stephanie Souer

Participating Guests:

Commissioner Liaison, Genny Reynolds

Members Absent: none

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Administrator Shaw called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

1. Administration of Oath of Office was read aloud by newly re-elected Supervisors Jake Janski and Robert Hoefert.
2. **Election of Officers**.....(action)

Shaw called for volunteers or nominations for the office of Chair.

- a. Chair/Public Relations Officer –

Beckstrom nominated Janski for the office of Chair. Campbell seconded. Shaw called for other nominations three times. With none made the nomination was put to a vote. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

Administrator Shaw turned the meeting over to the Chair. Janski called for nominations.

- b. Vice Chair – Campbell nominated Beckstrom for the office of Vice Chair. Hoefert seconded. Janski called for nominations three times. Seeing none, the nomination was put to a vote. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- c. Treasurer - Beckstrom **nominated LaSalle for the office of Treasurer.** Hoefert seconded. Janski called for nominations three times. Seeing none, the nomination was put to a vote. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- d. Secretary – Hoefert **nominated Campbell for the office of Secretary.** LaSalle seconded. Janski called for nominations three times. Seeing none, the nomination was put to a vote. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

3. **Conflict of Interest Declaration** – SWCD Policy 2021-01 states that a conflict of interest whether actual or perceived occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests and

these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially. Members are requested to identify any potential conflicts of interest they may have regarding today's business. The conflict-of-interest declaration form was provided to each for signature.

4. Approval of Agenda – (additions and deletions of new business or committee reports) (action)

- additions - pull ITEM 6.g 2023 fee schedule from the consent agenda and table until February.
move ITEM 6.h.ii supervisor compensation policy to later on the agenda as item 9.h
- deletions - none

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

5. 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. - No public comment.

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve November 10, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes (No December minutes-meeting was canceled)
- b. Approve November Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E22-188 - E22-206 and checks written #7899 - 7907, totaling \$32,218.17.
- c. Approve December Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E22-233 - E22-259 and checks written #7920 - 7926, totaling \$26,545.99.
- d. Annual statement of the cost to the district of benefits owed (vacation, sick, comp time etc)
 - i. Sick leave liability payout to Susan Shaw per personnel policy \$1,979
- e. Financial institutions (First National Bank of Milaca, Neighborhood National Bank of Mora)
- f. Signatures for accounts

(Current authorization for the Vice-Chair, Treasurer, District Administrator and Shoreland Technician to sign financial transactions and to require two signatures on checking accounts and only one signature for fund transfers from savings to checking.)

g. ~~2023 Fee Schedule~~ – table discussion until February

h. Approve expenditures that will impact the 2023 budget

i. Professional Associations Dues totaling \$7,479.86

National Assn of Conservation Dist.....	\$100
MN Assn SWCDs.....	\$6,294.86
Area 3 TSA	\$300
MN Assn of Cons Dist Employees.....	\$125
SWCD Forestry Assn	\$60
MN Assn Co Ag Inspectors	\$100
MACI dues	\$500

ii. ~~Supervisor compensation policy (current policy – \$60 per diem for meetings, Chair & Treasurer receive an additional \$5 for board meetings, \$15 additional if official district business requires travel of 50 miles or more one-way.) – move to later on the agenda~~

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

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

Discussion – Beckstrom indicated he appreciated the dues payment to the National Assn because with farm bill discussions and Federal ARP infrastructure funding which will both will impact conservation funding, being a member is probably more important than it has been in a long time.

Janski asked about the increase in MASWCD dues and noted there had been an increase last year as well.

Beckstrom indicated that the increase is needed because we are stretching the current three association staff

across too many expectations. No expectation that it will increase again as much next year but the increase is necessary. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

7. **NRCS/SWCD Memorandum of Understanding & Freedom of Information Act**..... (information)
Tabled – no NRCS representative was in attendance.

8. **Know and Understand SWCD Election Options**..... (information)
Mille Lacs SWCD currently elects under framework - Option 1 (Supervisors elected at large – Minnesota Statute 103C.311 subd. 1) provides for the establishment of nominating districts that determine who will be on the general election ballot for vote by the general electorate of the county.

Option 2 (Supervisors elected by districts – Minnesota Statute 103C.311 subd. 2) provides discretionary authority for SWCDs, with the approval of the Board of Water and Soil Resources, to change from the current countywide election of supervisors to election by a nominating district.

No change was desired by the board.

9. **District Policy, Planning, Activities, Projects, Grants**

- a. Approve February 2023 through January 2024 Board Meeting Dates (action)
The 2023 Regular Board Meetings of the Mille Lacs Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) will generally be held at 6:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month unless otherwise posted.

Meetings will be held at the Mille Lacs County Historical Courthouse, 635 2nd Street SE in Milaca. During the public health emergency, a remote video or teleconference option will be provided.

DATES AND TIMES ARE AS FOLLOWS UNLESS OTHERWISE POSTED

February 8

March 9th (moved to Thursday)

April 12th

May 10th

June 14th

July 12th

August 8th (moved to Tuesday)

September 13th

October 11th

November 8th

December 14th (moved to Thursday)

January 10, 2024

Motion by Janski to approve the 2023 meeting schedule. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- b. Internal Operational Committee Assignment (2 Members with 1 Alternate) (action)
i. Finance (Statement Audit)..... Hoefert & LaSalle (Campbell)
ii. Personnel..... Janski & LaSalle (Hoefert)
iii. Conservation Beckstrom & Campbell (Janski)
iv. Public Outreach Beckstrom & Campbell (LaSalle)

Motion by Beckstrom to approve the committee assignments as listed with no changes from the previous year. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- c. Water Management/Workgroups Assignments (1 Member with 1 Alternate)..... (action)
i. Rum River Watershed Partnership JPE Board Janski (Beckstrom)
ii. Snake River Watershed 1W1P Policy Cmte Beckstrom (Hoefert)

- iii. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Cmte Campbell (Hoefert)
- iv. Snake River Watershed Management Board - Citizen Advisory Committee Beckstrom (Hoefert)
- v. Technical Service Area 3 LaSalle (Hoefert)
- vi. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group Janski (LaSalle)
- vii. Forestry Association LaSalle (Campbell)

Campbell is interested in taking a larger role as alternate on the Forestry committee.

Motion by Beckstrom to approve members continue on the committees listed with no changes from the previous year. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- d. Area3/MASWCD Business – discussion by Beckstrom and Janski about their representation on Area committees.
- e. Personnel reviews/committee report (Janski, LaSalle) (info)
The personnel committee met with Shaw to do a performance review, and individually with Gallice and Souer to provide an opportunity for input to the personnel committee. Reviews were stellar for both positions. We seem to be in a better place with Civic Governance than last year. Staff report “placing trust in Shaw’s leadership.” The committee plans to dig in deeper with staff about civic governance and strategic planning for the February meeting.
- f. Payroll date change policy (action)
Proposed edits to the employee handbook include clarifying that salary and wages follow the Mille Lacs County pay scale and payday will change to the first Thursday following the last day of the pay period.

ARTICLE XIII: COMPENSATION AND PERFORMANCE

HOW EMPLOYEES WILL BE PAID

1. Employees will be paid by salary or hourly wages.
2. Salary and/or wages will be set by District Board following the Mille Lacs County pay scale
3. Cost of living increases or wage increases will be reviewed at the discretion of the District Board.
4. Overtime compensation will be as stated in Overtime policy.
5. Pay period is in two-week increments (80 hr).
6. Pay day is the first ~~Wednesday~~ Thursday following the last day of the pay period.

Motion by Beckstrom to approve edits to the employee handbook to clarify that salary and wages follow the Mille Lacs County pay scale and payday will change to the first Thursday following the last day of the pay period. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

Once the changes are made to the handbook a copy should be provided to the board and staff.

- g. Grant agreement LCCMR tabled until February
- h. Supervisor compensation policy from handbook:

Motion by LaSalle to approve the following supervisor compensation policies.

- To be compensated for meetings or travel the meeting must be approved by the board and documented in the official minutes.
- Reimbursement and compensation schedule will be quarterly following calendar quarters: Jan-March, April-June, July-Sept, Oct-December
- Supervisor compensation rate for services performed in the discharge of duties is \$60/per meeting up to the State per diem limit of \$125/day.
- Chair and Treasurer compensation includes an additional \$5 for board meetings

- Compensation rate includes an additional \$15 if official district business requires travel of 50 miles or more each way from their residence
 - The district follows the Federal mileage rate
 - Reimbursement for lodging must be authorized by the board.
 - Meals are reimbursed for meetings that require travel out of the county and/or require attendance over the lunch hour and accompanied by appropriate receipts up to a maximum of \$ 27.00 per day
 - Monthly one on one meetings with the District Administrator are eligible for compensation.
- Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

10. Financials

- Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) – LaSalle reconciled the bank statement with the QuickBooks accounting system.
- Financial update..... (info)
 - SRW 1W1P Planning Grant P20-9953 fiscal management: (action)
 - Budget funds transfer – internal adjustment of funds across work plan categories
 - \$2,000 move from MLSWCD’s Plan Development to MLSWCD’s Admin
 - \$3,000 move from Pine’s Plan Development to MLSWCD’s Admin
 - \$3,000 move from Contingency to Kanabec’s Plan Development
 - Stantec - \$2,375.00 for work done October 15-November 18, 2022
 - Kanabec SWCD - \$4,543.54 for project administration and outreach July 1- September 30, 2022

Motion by Beckstrom to authorize the internal work plan funds adjustment and approve payment to Stantec in the amount of \$2,375.00 for work done October 15-November 18, 2022 and Kanabec SWCD in the amount of \$4,543.54 for project administration and outreach for work done July 1- September 30, 2022 under the SRW 1w1p grant P20-9953. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- Tree Sale..... (info)

Stephanie reported having sold 61 bundles as of tonight. Slowly rolling out the credit card option to purchase but encountered difficulty creating online orders with the desktop version of Quickbooks that we use. Quickbooks credit card processing is not allowing us to attribute the fees to the customers so the SWCD is absorbing the fee this year which was budgeted in the tree program cost. There has not been pushback from the public regarding the price per bundle increase from last year. Tree availability is updated regularly on Facebook and Instagram.
- Supervisor 4th quarter 2022 compensation report..... (info)
- Approve the 2023 Billable Rate tabled until February
- Approval of 2023 Budget (action)

Stephanie provided a few tables comparing the 2021 financial status with that of 2022. She did a lookback 2021-22 revenue and expenditures and cash flow. There were no significant changes from last quarter. The district ended the year with a small net positive. LaSalle asked for the definition of “reimbursements.” Ms. Souer explained that these are expenses incurred doing grant work that the district must invoice to receive reimbursement for.

The 2023 budget includes five employee positions including an Ag tech and Watershed coordinator to be hired to meet watershed implementation needs. Supervisor compensation is increased. Reimbursable grants are indicated which the SWCD must cash flow. The rental equipment revenues and expenses are being reviewed and we anticipate the rental rate will need to be increased.

Motion by Beckstrom to approve the 2023 proposed budget. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

11. Informational Updates

- a. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. Technical Service Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert)
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle)
 - iii. Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell)

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

*Open meeting law requires that elected officials who are voting members at public meetings need to **be in person or at a public location that is also publicly noticed in advance** open public meetings*

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Beckstrom) Jan 26 @ 4:30
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert) TBD Jan 23 @ 9:00
- 1W1P Snake River Policy Committee Jan 23 @ 10:30
- BWSR Central Region Committee – draft plan presentation (Beckstrom) Jan 5 @ 2:30/remote option
- c. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) Dec 19 @ 10:00
- Sherburne History Center/remote option for staff
- d. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Jan 25 @ 10:00
- e. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle) Jan 23 @ 10:00, Location TBD
- f. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) Jan 19 @ 10:00, Location TBD
- g. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle) Dec 1
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) monthly
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Personnel Reviews met Dec 27th
 - 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

13. Supervisor Updates

Beckstrom reported there will be new representatives for Aitkin & Kanabec county and a new Kanabec SWCD rep. Beckstrom has reached out to each to help provide them background information.

NACD meeting included discussion on carbon sequestration practice and policy. Climate smart ag is big with NRCS supporting innovative equipment.

Legislative Day will be upcoming in March. MASWCD is relatively confident funding will come out of this session. 12 million is included in the governor's budget but MASWCD will be asking for 24 million. MASWCD's primary legislative objective is the funding bill. Support for bonding bill is also important to the MN river conservation funding.

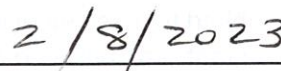
14. Evaluate the Meeting – everything acted upon is important to what staff need to do in the next month.

15. Next Regular Meeting – February 8, 2023 - 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.

16. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:35PM



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.