



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:

(1W1P) One Watershed, One Plan (BWSR program)  
(AgBMP) Agricultural BMP Loan Programs  
(BMP) Best Management Practice  
(BWSR) Board of Water & Soil Resources  
(CAI) County Agricultural Inspector  
(CWF) Clean Water Fund  
(JAA) Job Approval Authority  
(JPA, E or C) Joint Powers Agreement, Entity or Collaborative)  
(RRWP) Rum River Watershed Partnership (JPE board)  
(MRSC) Mississippi River St. Cloud  
(SWCD) Soil & Water Conservation District  
(LGU) Local Government Unit  
(MASWCD) MN Assn. of Soil & Water Cons. Districts

(MLBO) Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe  
(MLLWMG) Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt Group  
(MLSWCD) Mille Lacs Soil & Water Conservation District  
(NACD) National Association of Conservation Districts  
(NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service  
(PFM) Private Forest Management  
(SCS) State Cost Share  
(SRWMB) Snake River Watershed Mgmt Board (JPE board)  
(SRW PC) Snake River Watershed Policy Cmte (MOU board)  
(TSA 3) Technical Service Area 3 – SWCD Engineering  
(MAWQCP) MN Ag. Water Quality Certification Program  
(WPLMN) Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network  
(WCA) Wetland Conservation Act

Mille Lacs SWCD Board Meeting – MINUTES  
Wednesday, June 14, 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

**Participating Guests:**

NRCS District Conservationist, Barb Zeroth  
NRCS Team Lead, Brian Steffen

**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 - 5.a.ii SWCD resolution template for funding request
  - 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** - Barb Zeroth shared a report that provided details for the entire NRCS Team and gave a specific update on activities. Brian reported that the Local Work Group public input meeting will be June 20, 10AM at the Kanabec County courthouse.
4. **Consent Agenda**
  - a. Approve May 11, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
  - b. Approve Monthly Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E22-082- E22-097 and checks written #7961-7970, totaling \$26,455.80.

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

**Motion by LaSalle to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by Campbell.** Affirmative:

Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

**5. District Policy, Finance, Planning, Activities, Projects, Grants**

a. Financial Update .....(Treasurer/Shaw)

- i. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) - LaSalle reconciled the bank statement with the QuickBooks accounting system for April. We are a month behind but Andre will reconcile May at his next opportunity.
- ii. SWCD resolution guidelines on use of SWCD payment – the legislature approved a change in the funding mechanism. Capacity funds will no longer come from Clean Water Legacy Amendment funds but will now come from the State general fund. A portion of the funding will be available as of July 1. To receive the funding SWCDs must take action in the form of a resolution of which the MASWCD provided a template. It will need to have action annually in January.

**Motion by Beckstrom to use the template provided by MASWCD as is because it provides optimum flexibility.**

**Discussion:** Beckstrom made note that this is a historic moment for funding to SWCDs for conservation. This is an increase in funding but it is also important that this process will create less administrative burden.

**Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

b. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates

- i. Rum River Watershed Partnership JPE Board .....Janski (Beckstrom)  
The Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) met to discuss project requests. Morrison and Benton both requests project funding. MLSWCD did not submit anything additional.
- ii. Snake River Watershed 1W1P Policy Cmte .....Beckstrom (Hoefert)
  - 1. A draft JPE was provided for review by attorneys. No response by the Mille Lacs attorney.  
John Kolb of Rinke Noonan will be attending the SRWMB meeting representing Kanabec County and seeking discussion and input on what compromise could be struck within the JPE that might make Kanabec County Board comfortable signing an agreement.
- iii. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Cmte .....Campbell (Hoefert)
  - 1. The last meeting was canceled.

c. MDH Drinking Water Protection Grant agreement (SWIFT contract #229294)..... (action)

**Motion by Beckstrom to authorize execution of the contract by the District Administrator. Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

d. Employee handbook policy changes ..... (action)

i. Paid holidays

**Motion by Beckstrom to add Juneteenth to the list of District paid holidays in the employee handbook. Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, LaSalle, Campbell. **Opposed:** Hoefert. **The motion carried.**

**Motion by Campbell to follow Mille Lacs County policy regarding the language used changing Columbus day to Indigenous peoples day. Second by Beckstrom.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, LaSalle, Campbell. **Opposed:** Hoefert. **The motion carried.**

Employee recognition – Shaw introduced the idea of mirroring the MLC policy and join in recognizing SWCD staff alongside county staff. Beckstrom suggested the need for recognizing conservationists as had been done years ago. Following discussion, it was agreed that recognizing employees and others is a good idea, but how to do that will take some discussion so the idea will be forwarded to the outreach committee.

- ii. other updates - tabled
- e. Personnel committee report ..... (Janski/LaSalle)
  - i. Approve hire of Financial Specialist - Pamela Kuhn starting June 20, full time regular, grade J step 7  
**Motion by LaSalle to officially affirm the hire of Pamela Kuhn as Financial Specialist starting June 20, 2023 as a full time regular employee, grade J step 7. Second by Hoefert.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
  - ii. Resource Conservationist – Ag specialist hiring update  
**Motion by Beckstrom to authorize the Administrator and Personnel committee to interview and make an employment offer for the Ag Resources Conservationist position.** Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

**6. Informational Updates**

- a. Tree Sale outcomes, and profit/loss were provided by Shaw. The outcome of the effort met district goals. The effort provided a mechanism to make new contacts in the community with a net positive revenue covering the time invested in the effort.
- b. Area3/MASWCD Business..... (Beckstrom-A3 Director/Janski-A3 Exec Cmte)
  - i. Resolutions meeting report:  
 Beckstrom reported the discussion on resolutions by supervisors at the Area 3 meeting was very active, no tacit approvals, lots of engagement by all. The Mille Lacs SWCD funding resolution was pulled because it was not needed given the outcome of the legislative session. The resolution on forestry funding failed to be put forward to for the annual meeting. The Mille Lacs SWCD was unable to come up with a revised clear version close enough to the original resolution to put forward at the Area meeting. Two other districts provided forestry funding resolutions, but after discussion the membership agreed the language of the resolution was unclear, so the decision was to not put the resolution forward. Three other resolutions passed: Production of Video Explaining Elected SWCD Supervisor Roles & Responsibilities, Outdoor School for All, Establishment of Recreational Harvest Limits and Spawning Protection for Native Rough Fish  
  
 NRCS representatives Troy Daniell and Steve Cole both attended and provided information on the NRCS forestry activity and RCPP funding.  
  
 There were a lot of legislative updates provided at the meeting by MASWCD.  
  
 The fall meeting will be hosted by Carlton SWCD Sept 21-22.
- c. BWSR 2023 legislative & Law Summary ..... (info)  
 The state cost share programs will be available for broader use with less administrative requirements.
- d. USDA-NRCS Local Work Group public input process will be held in Mora, June 20 @10AM ..... (info)
- e. Water Management/Workgroups
  - i. Technical Service Area 3 ..... (LaSalle/Hoefert)
  - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (May 15) ..... (Janski/LaSalle)  
 Janski attended the last meeting. Gallice will provide updates on Compass before the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. The June 24<sup>th</sup> Lunch and Learn forestry speaker changed to Dan Steward.
  - iii. Forestry Association (May 18) .....(LaSalle/Campbell)  
 Lots of info provided on tree tubes to prevent seedling browsing by deer.
- f. Mille Lacs County LGU special meeting ..... (Campbell)  
 Campbell and Shaw attended but were not provided an opportunity to speak. The meeting was primarily dominated by township complaints about MLC zoning processes and lack of coordination regarding Township ordinances. There were MLC department updates but questions were not allowed until the end of the meeting. After considering that there could be value in coordinating with townships about SWCD roles, Dan has taken initiative and introduced himself to townships in District 1 to share SWCD interests

and activities that overlap with township roles. Beckstrom plans to attend a Milo township meeting to discuss going in together on culvert inventory grant.

- g. General Project Updates..... (info)  
Lynn Gallice provided a written summary of activities underway.

**7. Approved SWCD Meetings & Events - Motion by Beckstrom to approve supervisor attendance/reimbursement for the following meetings.** Second by Hoefert Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed:

none. **The motion carried.**

- a. Mille Lacs County Board LGU meeting (**Campbell**)..... May 30 @ 4:00
- b. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (**Janski/Beckstrom**) ..... June 22 @ 4:30
- c. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (**Beckstrom/Hoefert**) ..... TBD June 26 @ 9:00
- d. 1W1P Snake River Policy Committee (**Beckstrom/Hoefert**) ..... June 26 @ 10:30
- e. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) ..... July 27 @ 1-3:00
- f. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) ..... June 28 @ 10:00
- g. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (**Janski/LaSalle**)..... June 24 @ 1:00
- h. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) ..... July 20 @ 10:00
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
  - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
    - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (**LaSalle**)..... monthly
    - 2. Finance Committee ..... TBD
  - ii. Personnel (**Janski/LaSalle**)
    - 1. Hiring process (Ag Resource Conservationist interviews) ..... June 15 @ 1:40
    - 2. Civic Governance review ..... TBD
    - 3. Personnel Reviews ..... TBD
  - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell) ..... Feb to prepare for cropping season
    - 1. Rental Equipment management (**Beckstrom/LaSalle**)..... as needed
  - iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)
    - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator ..... please schedule monthly as needed
  - vi. Area 3 fall mtg Sept 21-22
  - vii. Convention Dec 11-13th

**8. Supervisor Updates** – Kurt will be attending the NACD meeting in Bismark.

**9. Evaluate the Meeting** – good meeting

**10. Next Regular Meeting** – July 12, 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.

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

  
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Dan Campbell, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary

July 12, 2023  
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.