



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  
Tuesday, August 8, 2023

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

**Members Present:**

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3 (remote/non-voting)

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, Pam Kuhn

Ag Resource Conservationist, Willow Dean

**Participating Guests:** none

**Members Absent:** none

**Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance –** Vice-Chair Beckstrom called the meeting to order at 6:03 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 Authorization to prepay on 2024 trees for sale
- deletions - \_\_\_\_\_

**Motion by Campbell to approve the agenda as amended.** Second by Hoefert. 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. - **No public comment.**

**4. Consent Agenda**

- Approve July 12, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approve Monthly Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E22-129- E22-147 and checks written #7980-7986, totaling \$26,922.41.
- Monthly Deposit Detail
- Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases

e. Administrators leave request – Jury duty and personal leave Sept 18-21

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

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

a. Financial Update ..... (Treasurer/Financial Specialist)  
Ms. Kuhn shared that she has been working to complete the 2022 year-end audit and items to prepare the 2024 budget such as the program log, time tracking system. She has offered to work Saturday to make quicker progress. The district did receive the SWCD Conservation aide payment in the amount of \$80,176.77.

i. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member) - LaSalle reconciled the July bank statement with the QuickBooks accounting system and everything looked good.

ii. Authorization to prepay on 2024 trees for sale ..... (Shaw)  
Shaw presented a proposal to purchase approximately 10,150 trees with comparison to numbers and species sold in 2022 and 2023. The proposal included a number of considerations for the future and how to choose species for sale given anticipated changes to the regional climate and its effect on species long term survival. Consensus of the board was to rely on staff judgement regarding tree species to sell.

**Motion by Hoefert to authorize the preorder of approximately 10,150 trees for the 2024 sale. 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)

ii. Snake River Watershed 1W1P Policy Cmte ..... Beckstrom (Hoefert)

1. Final JPA for Implementation – action requested by 9/25/23

**Motion by Hoefert to adopt and sign the joint powers agreement for the implementation of the snake river comprehensive watershed management plan. Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

iii. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Cmte ..... Campbell (Hoefert)

1. Partners have been asked to seek input from attorneys on their preferred implementation agreement structure. – Shaw has reached out to the Mille Lacs County attorneys office but has received no response yet.

2. MRSC Landscape Stewardship Plan sub-agreement and commitment to contribute \$180.50 as the Mille Lac county area share..... (action)

**Motion by Campbell to sign the MRSC Landscape Stewardship Plan sub-agreement and pay the \$180.50. Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

c. Policy – Land Owner Technical Assistance Agreement - final version..... (action)

The purpose of the document is to clarify agreements and expectations between cooperators and the district before the SWCD invests a lot of time into project development. The goal is to identify high quality projects with a strong likelihood of implementation and long term buy-in and management by land owner. The fee structure proposed in the July draft was dropped after discussion with the Carlton SWCD who previously tested the fee structure and found it cumbersome to manage. Charging a deposit on services is not the only way to find out if land owners are seriously invested in long term, quality projects.

**Motion by Hoefert to adopt the new Land owner Technical Assistance Agreement. Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**



- d. Personnel & District Capacity
  - i. Personnel Committee report..... (Janski/LaSalle/Administrator)  
 Janski and LaSalle met as a personnel committee to discuss strategic planning and the civic governance policy. They have not discussed the outcomes with Shaw yet.
    - 1. Mid-year reviews - The committee did a mid-year review with Shaw who is managing a large workload. Shaw met with all staff regarding work plan goals.
    - 2. Monthly reviews for probationary employees - They also met individually with all employees and plan to meet with the new probationary employee again in 30 days.
  - ii. Hiring process updates – Shaw is drafting the job description for the Rum watershed outreach & forestry coordination roles. Shaw will work with the personnel committee to review before convening the Rum partnership committee for input. The personnel committee will proceed with posting and interviewing as soon as possible.

**6. Informational Updates (40 min.)**

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates
  - 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)
- b. LCCMR Tree Planting grant – subcontract with MLBO ..... (info)  
 Shaw is coordinating with BWSR and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe staff to develop a sub-agreement to be used to fiscally administer funds identified for the tribe under the grant.
- c. Area3/MASWCD Business..... (Beckstrom-A3 Director/Janski-A3 Exec Cmte)  
 All staff and board members are encouraged to attend the September Area 3 meeting.
- d. Water Management/Workgroups
  - i. Technical Service Area 3 ..... (LaSalle/Hoefert)
  - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group ..... (Janski)  
 The group is discussing a 10 year strategic plan and planning for the September Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event to be held 9/23/23, 10am-2pm at McQuoid's. There will be a lunch and learn during the event as well from 12-1pm.
  - iii. Forestry Association ..... (LaSalle)  
 The meeting included a long presentation on RIM and discussion on policies.
- e. Program Implementation Updates ..... (info)
  - i. Mille Lacs Lake protection efforts – Gallice will likely bring a project contract to the Sept meeting.
  - ii. Groundwater/drinking water safety ..... <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/cgm/index.html>
  - iii. Agriculture: Bogus Brook & West Branch impairment restoration efforts ..... (Willow Dean)  
 Ms Dean reported on her initial effort to identify feedlots and livestock in the Bogus Brook subwatershed which could be contributing to the bacteria impairment. She will be working out a plan to reach out to these stakeholders.
  - iv. Forestry: Rum River watershed wide efforts
  - v. Information/outreach: The MLSWCD website will undergo a format update later this year as time allows. Staff will work with our webhost ArcStone to migrate the site to the new template format. Facebook has not been maintained recently. Shaw will work with Ms Dean or Ms Kuhn to manage once the workload allows.

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

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Beckstrom)..... Sept 28 @ 4:30
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert) ..... TBD Aug 28 @ 9:00
- c. 1W1P Snake River Policy Committee (Beckstrom/Hoefert) ..... Aug 28 @ 10:30

- d. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) ..... TBD
- e. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) ..... Sept 27 @ 10:00
- f. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle) ..... Aug 21 @ 10:00
- g. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) ..... changed to Sept 14 @ 10:00
- h. Area 3/MASWCD meetings
  - i. MASWCD Resolutions Committee (Janski) ..... Sept 6
  - ii. Area 3 Fall Meeting ..... Sept 21-22, Cloquet Forestry Ctr
  - iii. MASWCD Annual Convention ..... Dec 11-13
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
  - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
    - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) ..... monthly
  - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
    - 1. Hiring process ..... TBD
    - 2. Personnel Reviews ..... Sept 60-day probationary employees
  - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell)
    - 1. Rental Equipment management (Beckstrom/LaSalle) ..... as needed  
**The travel pin mechanism may need replacement. Tires are worn and need replacement, Beckstrom recommends replacing with road tires.**
  - iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)
    - 1. Employee/Citizen recognition plan ..... TBD
  - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator ..... please schedule monthly as needed

**8. Supervisor Updates**

Beckstrom did some research on a resolution that he'd like to bring to the board for consideration next month. NRCS has a project application batching process which can be a delayed process. Beckstrom is concerned with the IRA funding coming a less bureaucratic and quicker process for funding approval may be needed. Beckstrom is recommending a continuous signup format. Janski is interested in seeing the resolution drafted and clarifying what criteria need to be met for an emergency resolution. Janski is also curious how NRCS feels about the proposed resolution.

Shaw reported she has had no time to look into applying for funding for a culvert inventory. Janski recommended having a drafted plan for grant application prepared in advance for next year, allowing for better outreach and potential participation from townships.

LaSalle just dropped some samples at Elk River to test for bacteria. Campbell recently had a well pump replaced and exchanged stories with a well company about open wells they encounter with inadequate safety and protection from contamination.

- 9. Next Regular Meeting** – September 13, 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.

- 10. Adjourn – Motion by Hoefert to adjourn the meeting at 7:23PM. Second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Beckstrom, Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

  
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 Dan Campbell, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary

9/13/2023  
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 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.