



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, September 13, 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
Secretary, Dan Campbell, District 1

Members Absent:

Treasurer, Andre LaSalle, District 4
Member, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw
Financial Specialist, Pam Kuhn
Resource Conservationist – Shoreland, Lynn Gallice

Participating Guests:

Commissioner Liaison, Genny Reynolds
NRCS, Barb Zeroth

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance– Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6:04 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.g BWSR FY24 Buffer grant
- deletions - _____

Motion by Beckstrom to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Dan. Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, 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.

Ms. Zeroth reported that the NRCS team lead is on leave until Jan 2nd so Ms. Zeroth is filling in for the Cambridge office during that time. Several grazing and conservation site visits are scheduled and Ms. Zeroth plans to include Willow if the dates work for her.

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve August 8, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Approve Monthly Disbursements - Electronic transfer's #E23-148- E23-167 and checks written #7987-7992, totaling \$29,742.16.
- c. Monthly Deposit Detail
- d. Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases

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

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

- a. Financial Update (Financial Specialist Kuhn)
Ms. Kuhn reported that she is working on budgeting with Ms. Shaw and preparing treasurers reports for the next meeting. The audit is in final review and will be done shortly.
 - i. Proposed 2024 Budget and request to MLC (Administrator)
Cmsr Reynolds reported there was not a lot of support from the county board to fund replacement of the vehicle. The county board did however express support to continue funding the SWCD at the level funded in 2023 with cost-of-living increases. Shaw will work with the county administer to explore if a fleet vehicle could be transferred or purchased. Campbell asked if there would be support for a smaller amount of \$ to the SWCD for a vehicle.
 - ii. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member)
Ms. Kuhn reported that LaSalle reviewed expenditures and did the account reconciliations earlier in the day and everything looked good.
- b. MLSWCD Data Practices Policy – update designee (action)
<https://www.millelacsswcd.org/district-business/2020-01-Mille-Lacs-SWCD-Data-Practices-Policy.pdf>
Motion by Beckstrom to approve updating Kuhn as a data practices designee. Second by Campbell.
Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- c. BWSR CWF Grant – Central Mille Lacs Co Targeted Well Sealing (C23-6045)
 - i. **Motion by Beckstrom to approve payment in the amount of \$1,145.00** under Contract C23-6045-1 for well sealing for Joanne and Michael Gregersen based on 50% of the estimated eligible cost of \$2,290.00. **Second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - ii. **Motion by Campbell to approve contract C23-6045-2** to seal two wells for Jim Blonigan in an amount not to exceed \$1,615.00, based on 50% of the estimated eligible cost of \$3,230.00. **Second by Beckstrom.** Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - iii. **Motion by Beckstrom to approve contract C23-6045-3** to seal a well for Kelly Applegate in an amount not to exceed \$292.50, based on 50% of the estimated eligible cost of \$585.00. **Second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- d. Rum River Watershed Partnership WBIF Implementation (SOW 2023-MLSWCD-UBMP-3)
Ms. Gallice provided a description and photos of the project being considered for WBIF funding.
 - i. **Motion by Campbell to approve contract WBIFC23-3265-1** for a stormwater control project for Paul and Wynette Rodriquez that will stabilize a large gully in an amount of \$16,500.00 based on 75% of the estimated eligible cost of \$22,000.00. **Second by Beckstrom.** Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- e. Personnel & District Capacity
 - i. Monthly reviews for probationary employees..... (Administrator/Personnel Committee)

LaSalle and Janski did an initial meeting with Kuhn and Dean in August. Followed by a meeting early Sept to get feedback. The personnel committee connected with Shaw to share feedback on developing a plan for next steps. The process seems to be going well to support Shaw moving forward. The committee will follow-up in a couple weeks.

- ii. Hiring process updates – Shaw reported a Watershed Organizer job description has been drafted with lots of input from the personnel committee and Rum watershed outreach committee partners. Next step is to have the position graded by the MLC consultant to set the wage range for the position.
- f. Emergency Resolution for MASWCD.....**(discussion/action)**
Beckstrom drafted an emergency resolution to present to the MASWCD Board for consideration. He reached out to Sheila Vanney at MASWCD and Troy Daniel at NRCS for input. Discussion and additional input from Ms. Zeroth was provided.

Motion by Beckstrom to approve an Emergency Resolution to Temporarily add a continuous awarding process to fund high ranking NRCS projects, and provide to MASWCD for consideration.

WHEREAS, Minnesota's SWCDs have been presented with significant opportunities to invest in private lands conservation through appropriations to USDA NRCS that are part of the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA); and

WHEREAS, these funds are only available within a limited window of time; and

WHEREAS, to make the best and most effective use of these funds, it is vital to find ways to expedite the processes used for identifying which projects will get funded; and

WHEREAS, the locally led work group process which SWCDs work on with our NRCS partners continues to provide locally identified resource concerns where funding may be directed as it becomes available;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, be it resolved, that MASWCD encourage NRCS to keep the continuous signup application process, but add a continuous awarding process to fund high ranking projects as they come in, with this process to cease when IRA expires.

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

- g. BWSR FY24 Buffer Law Implementation grant (P24-0086) – authorization to execute..... **(action)**
Motion by Campbell to approve the Administrator **to execute the FY24 buffer law implementation grant agreement. Second by Beckstrom.** Affirmative: Janski, Beckstrom, Campbell. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

6. Informational Updates

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning (1W1P) updates
 - i. Rum River Watershed Partnership JPE Board Janski (Beckstrom)
 - 1. Janski listened in on the Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) meeting. He found it interesting that we are already needing to make minor edits to the plan to be able to achieve what was intended.
 - ii. Snake River Watershed 1W1P Policy Cmte Beckstrom/Shaw (Hoefert)
The 1W1P planning partnership will meet for the first time as a JPE board at the next meeting.
Snake River Watershed Mgmt Board - Pine County has acted to pull out of the SRWMB and are asking for their funds back. Aitkin has also asked to leave the SRWMB. Beckstrom was hoping the funds contributed to the SRWMB could be used as match for the WBIF grant. Rinke Noonan will present to the Kanabec board before they make a decision.
 - iii. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Cmte Campbell
The Policy Board met and received updates from the Steering and Advisory committees. They received comments from attorneys representing partners and it looks like the group is leaning toward a JPE framework.

- iv. BWSR Board funding per watershed published (info)
- b. Area3/MASWCD Business (Beckstrom-A3 Director/Janski-A3 Exec Cmte)
The Area 3 fall meeting and tour is upcoming next week. Janski will attend as Vice Chair and staff member Dean will also attend.
- c. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. Technical Service Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert)
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle)
Planning continues for the Healthy Land, Healthy Lake (HLHL) event. Gallice will be there to participate in a discussion/round table regarding projects on the lake. Next meeting will include strategic planning.
 - iii. Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell)
- d. General Project Updates (info)
 - i. Mille Lacs Lake protection efforts – Aitkin SWCD coordinated with MLBO to do a complete drone erosion survey of ML lake.
 - ii. Groundwater/drinking water safety efforts – Ms. Dean has identified a list of landowners for a mailing. Trying to identify interest in BMPs. Will coordinate with NRCS.
 - iii. Forestry/Rum River watershed wide efforts – Shaw will be meeting with partners to determine interest in roles for subcontracting under the LCCMR tree planting grant.
- iv. Information/outreach:
 - 1. Website – what contact info do supervisors want posted? (decision)
Supervisors were asked to take a look at the SWCD website and consider what contact information they want listed. Provide feedback to staff by the next meeting.
 - 2. District apparel order..... (info)
Ms. Kuhn is pulling together an SWCD apparel order which will be useful for public events. Kuhn will email a link to review items. Please select and let Kuhn know so she can calculate the cost. Each individual must cover the cost for their own items themselves.

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

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Beckstrom) Sept 28 @ 4:30
 - i. Implementation Planning Committee (Janski) Sept 11 @ 12:30
- b. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert) Sept 25 @ 9:00
- c. 1W1P Snake River Policy Committee (Beckstrom/Hoefert)..... Sept 25 @ 10:30
- d. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) Sept 7 @ 1-3:00
- e. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Sept 27 @ 10:00
- f. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Mgmt. Group (Janski/LaSalle)..... Oct 19 @ 10:00
 - i. Healthy Land Healthy Lake Sept 23 @10:00
- g. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) Sept 15 @ 10:00
- h. Area 3/MASWCD meetings
 - i. MASWCD Resolutions Committee (Janski)..... Sept 6
 - ii. Area 3 Fall Meeting, Cloquet Forestry CtrSept 21-22
 - iii. MASWCD Annual ConventionDec 11-13
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle)monthly
 - 2. Finance Committee (LaSalle/Hoefert) met Aug 22
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Hiring processTBD
 - 2. Civic Governance review.....TBD
 - 3. Personnel ReviewsSept 7

- iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell) Feb to prepare for cropping season
 - 1. Rental Equipment management (Beckstrom/LaSalle)..... as needed
- 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


9. Evaluate the Meeting – good meeting, Janski’s chairmanship is appreciated.

10. Next Regular Meeting – Wednesday, October 11, 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 7:49 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.