



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, April 10, 2024

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

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3

Treasurer, Andre LaSalle, District 4

Member, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Financial Specialist, Pam Kuhn

Resource Conservationist, Willow Dean

Members Absent:

Secretary, Dan Campbell, District 1

Vice Chair, Kurt Beckstrom, District 2

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 - 9.a.v Mississippi Sartell watershed “We are Water” event
- deletions - _____

Motion by Hoefert to approve the agenda as amended. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. 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 March 13, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Supervisor 1st Qtr 2024 compensation report
- Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases

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

5. Strategic Planning (tabled)

6. Organizational Business, Fiscal and Grants

- a. Financial Update was provided by Ms. Kuhn.
 - i. **Motion by Hoefert to approve** the treasurers report, balance sheet and monthly transactions quick-report showing disbursements - electronic transfer's #E24-47- E24-66, credit card fees and checks written #8043-8078, totaling \$39,035.24 and subject to audit. **Second by LaSalle**. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - ii. Reconciliation of Bank Statements – LaSalle reported that he reconciled the March accounts and everything looked good.
- b. Authorization to incur debt toward 2025 conservation tree sale – no action taken at this time. Discussion included staff effort to minimize the time to operate the program balanced with competitive pricing from other nurseries. The board was supportive of the species selected. Staff can bring a request for authorization of expenditure once a cost has been identified.
- c. Fee schedule (action)
Discussion regarding clarification needed for the tree planter rental rate intended to be \$50 per day for a maximum of 3 days, plus cleaning and late fees if applicable.
Motion by LaSalle to approve the 2024 fee schedule. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- d. Area 3 Envirothon donation request \$250 (action)
Motion by Hoefert to approve a donation of \$250 to the Area 3 Envirothon. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- e. Rental programs (discussion)
 - i. Contracts for the tree planter and tree planting bars have been being updated.

Additional Board discussion regarding Ms. Dean’s comfort operating and maintaining the interseeders. Ms. Dean expressed that she was comfortable enough to begin renting them out. The Board was supportive of paying Chris Carlson to review maintenance and operation of the equipment with Ms. Dean if desired.

- f. Grant Activities
 - i. FY23 CWF Central ML county targeted well sealing grant agreement (C23-6045)
 - 1. **Motion by Hoefert** to approve contract C23-6045-4: Cost share application for well sealing for Don Patnode in an amount not to exceed \$591.50 based on 50% of the eligible cost of \$1,183.00. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - ii. Rum River Watershed Partnership WBIF Implementation
 - 1. Draft FY25 WBIF budget for partner board courtesy review - Janski explained that the Implementation Policy Committee (IPC) developed a proposed work plan budget for FY25 WBIF work and will be providing it for a 45 day courtesy review for partner boards. Questions and concerns can be shared with the RRWP JPE Board at the June 27 meeting. It can be reviewed again at the May meeting.
 - iii. BWSR Soil Health Staffing grant (C24-0139) (action)
Motion by Hoefert to authorize the Administrator to execute & purchase a laptop once grant agreement is received. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

- iv. MDH Well Water Testing FY23 C229294 (reimbursable expenses) (action)
 - 1. order postcards for targeted outreach - \$1,715
 - 2. order 50 additional well water testing kits (\$115 ea) - \$5,750

Motion by LaSalle to approve both the order of postcards in the amount of \$1,715 and purchase of 50 additional well water test kits in the amount of \$5,750. **Second by Hoefert.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
- v. MPCA WPLMN water sampling #183616 (reimbursable expenses) (action)
 - 1. **Motion by LaSalle** to approve payment for the YSI handheld meter in the amount of \$7,637.07. **Second by Hoefert.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**

7. Implementation, Activities, Project Updates (info or presentations)

Janski asked the board regarding the level of detail provided in staff reports. LaSalle commented it was sufficient, no additional detail needed.

- a. Mille Lacs Lake protection efforts (Lynn Gallice – lead) see staff report
- b. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead) see staff report
- c. Agriculture/Soil Health (Willow Dean – lead) **presentation by Willow Dean**
 Ms. Dean talked through her written report. She has been attending trainings, one yesterday was on restoration and seed calculator work that she envisions will help with future CRP plantings. The Rum River Watershed Partnership board accepted her proposed cover crop change for prevent plant acres. Each office can set their own policy on rates.
 Mississippi River St. Cloud meetings upcoming will be about finalizing the plan and getting ready for a public hearing.
 Ms. Dean will be taking on additional water sampling for pesticides under MDA. Supplies may be needed to haul the bottles.
 Ms. Dean is also working on a pilot project to do genetic testing for the source of the ecoli in some streams. This would companion MPCA stream sampling and may happen watershed wide.
- d. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead) see staff report
- e. Community Conversations (Molly Clyne – lead) see staff report
- f. Outreach/Information
 - i. Conservation tree sale (Pam Kuhn – lead) see staff report
 - 1. 2025 proposed tree order-authorization to incur expense ~\$14,000 tabled
 - 2. UofM highbush cranberry study (Janski) (discussion)
 Janski provided a draft letter of support for a proposed project to investigate if there is a European Highbush Cranberry that has been inadvertently sold by nurseries in MN mistakenly as the native Highbush Cranberry. SWCDs may have inadvertently had a part in distributing through tree sales. They have a genetic test to investigate this. It’s a native vs non-native issue but it is not known if the non-native is invasive at this point. This is simply to understand the distribution.
 Hoefert felt that since SWCDs are distributing it is in our best interest to investigate this.
Motion by Hoefert to approve sending a letter of support to investigate European Highbush Cranberry. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
Janski will share with other SWCDs as well.
 - ii. Website/social media (Molly Cylne – lead) see staff report
 - iii. Election info/community awareness/candidate recruitment Janski/LaSalle/Shaw
 (Filing period May 21-June 4: nomination districts 1,2 and 4 are up for re-election)
 LaSalle drafted a news release for the two local papers. LaSalle will submit for the SWCD. Janski plans to reach out to the MLBO and other groups he knows.

8. Personnel & District Capacity

9. Informational Updates

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning updates
 - i. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP)..... Janski (Beckstrom)/staff
Annual progress report in the packet.
 - ii. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) Beckstrom (Hoefert)/staff
 - iii. Snake River Watershed Management Board (SRWMB) Beckstrom (Hoefert)/staff
 - iv. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Committee (MRSC)..... Campbell (Hoefert)/staff
WD planning to attend a Monday policy level discussion on watershed allocations.
 - v. Miss Sartell Watershed planning is just kicking off and will be hosting a We are Waters event open house.
- b. Area 3/MASWCD Business..... (Janski-A3 Director)
Janski reported the MASWCD has been convening a workgroup to identify how to have area meetings of more relevance to get better attendance and standardize them more across the state. May make the meetings easier to host and garner broader information.
 - i. Cloquet Forestry Center use agreement – authorization/signature**(action)**
The June resolutions meeting venue needs to have rental agreement approved by the host district. Mille Lacs SWCD will be hosting.
Motion by Hoefert to approve naming the Cloquet Forestry Center as additional insured for the A3 Resolutions meeting. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. Opposed: none. **The motion carried.**
 - ii. MASWCD Resolutions/Policy Development **(discussion/action)**
Just a reminder by Janski to consider any resolutions to submit for next month.
- c. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. SWCD Engineering Technical Service Area 3 (canceled due to weather)..... (LaSalle/Hoefert)
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle)/staff
The group is applying for lots of grants for funding activities.
 - iii. MN SWCD Forestry Association(LaSalle/Campbell)/staff
Janski attended. Aitkin has purchased a drone to do aerial seeding.

10. Approved SWCD Meetings & Events - Motion by Hoefert to approve supervisor attendance/reimbursement for the following meetings. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Janski. 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)..... June 27@ 4:30
 - i. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) liaison (Janski) did not attendApr 8 @ 12:30
- b. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) JPE Board (Beckstrom/Hoefert)Apr 22 @ 10:30
- c. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Beckstrom/Hoefert)TBD @ 9:00
- d. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (**Campbell**/Hoefert)April 4 @ 1-3:00
- e. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert)Mar 27 was canceled – TBD if reschedule
- f. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (Janski/LaSalle)
 - i. Planning session (MLBO Gov center).....April 19 @ 1-5:00
- g. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) May 16 @ 10:00
- h. Area 3/MASWCD meetings
 - i. Area 3 Resolutions Meeting, Cloquet Forestry Ctr.....June 7
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) monthly
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - iii. Conservation (Beckstrom/Campbell)

iv. Public Outreach (Beckstrom/Campbell)

v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed

11. Supervisor Updates

Janski has been invited to participate on the Mille Lacs County Comprehensive Plan update.

12. Evaluate the Meeting

Thank you for the input on content of staff reports. Thank you to staff for attending.

13. Next Regular Meeting – May 8, 2024 at 6PM, Historic Courthouse, Conf Rm D w/public remote option

14. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:37PM.



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.