



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

(MLLWG) Mille Lacs Lake Watershed 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 11, 2024

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

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3

Vice-Chair/Secretary, Dan Campbell, District 1

Treasurer, Andre LaSalle, District 4

Member, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Member, Tim Braun, District 2

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Financial Specialist, Pam Kuhn

Resource Conservationist – Siena Storm

Watershed Organizer – Molly Clyne

Members Absent:

None

Participating Guests:

None

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 – item 8. Van replacement
- deletions - _____

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

- a. Approve July 10, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Approve August 14, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes
- c. Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases

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

5. Strategic Planning

6. Organizational Business, Fiscal and Grants

a. Financial Update (Treasurer/Financial Specialist)

- i. July Treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report: Ms. Kuhn reviewed the July transactions and treasurers report, detailing grant reimbursements received. Most of the reimbursements were for staff time spent on grants for the first two quarters.

Motion by Campbell to approve the July Treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report which include electronic transfer’s #E24-162 - E24-184, credit card fees and checks written #8092-8103, totaling \$43,426.46 and subject to audit. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

Tim Braun arrived at 6:12 PM

- ii. August Treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report: Ms. Kuhn reported most of the deposits were again reimbursements for staff time tracked to grants.

- iii. **Motion by LaSalle to approve the August Treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report which include electronic transfer’s #E24-185- E24-204, credit card fees and checks written #8104-8111, totaling \$35,252.29 and subject to audit. Second by Hoefert.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

- b. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Finance Committee Member)
LaSalle reported the August bank statements reconciled with the QuickBooks reports.

- c. Board Committee vacancy appointments **(action)**
2024 Board Officers

- Chair/Public Relations Officer Jake Janski
- Vice Chair..... Dan Campbell
- Treasurer Andre LaSalle
- Secretary Dan Campbell
- Member..... Robert Hoefert

2024 Internal Operational Committees

- Finance (Statement Audit) Hoefert & LaSalle (Campbell)
- Personnel..... Janski & LaSalle (Hoefert)
- Conservation LaSalle & Campbell (Janski)
- Public Outreach LaSalle & Campbell (Janski)

Workgroups/Water Management

- Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board..... Janski (Braun)
- Snake River Watershed 1W1P Policy Committee Hoefert (Braun)
- Mississippi/St. Cloud Watershed 1W1P Policy Cmte Campbell (Hoefert)
- Snake River Watershed Management Board - Citizen Advisory Cmte (CAC)..... Hoefert (Braun)
- Engineering Technical Service Area (TSA3) LaSalle (Hoefert)
- Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group (MLLWMG) Janski (LaSalle)
- MN SWCD Forestry Association LaSalle (Campbell)

Motion by Braun to approve updated 2024 committee assignments. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

- d. Grant Activities

i. BWSR Soil Health –

- 1. FY25 Soil Health Delivery grant agreement **(action)**

Motion by Hoefert to approve to execute. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

2. Soil health cost share policy (info to be provided at meeting) (action)

Policy # 2024-03 Mille Lacs SWCD - Agricultural Non-Structural Practices

Incentives to install or adopt non-structural best management practices that improve or protect water quality are eligible for use of funds. The goal of these practices is ongoing landowner adoption unless otherwise approved by BWSR.

Non-structural BMPs will be planned and implemented according to the Natural Resource Conservation Service standards and specifications found on the Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (EFOTG). However, seeding dates for cover crops may follow Midwest Cover Crop Council seeding guide recommendations.

For all non-structural BMP practices, cost share funding will be comprised of a flat per acre rate incentive based on the Minnesota NRCS Practice Average Annual Cost Information Spreadsheet FY2018 (or more recent as it becomes available) and the Practice Cost Information Workbook Tool 2019 (or more recent) found in the EFOTG.

Contract length

Practices will be planned for 1- or 3-years of implementation.

1-year contracts are available to allow landowners to start small by trying a practice with little commitment. 1-year contracts apply to cover crops only.

For practices with 3 years of implementation, practices may be implemented on the same acres for the 3-year duration (required for nutrient management and prescribed grazing), practices may move with the rotation but must implement the same amount or greater acres in years 2 and 3, or two or more practices may be implemented on the same acres for the 3-year period alternating years (ex. Plant cover crops after corn harvest, no-till soybeans the following year).

Contract Payments

A one-time payment shall be made upon the first season's certification by the district for both one-and three-year contracts. Certification includes verification of seeding, seed mix, and rate. The practice must be certified and inspected by the district annually for three-year contracts to ensure implementation. If the practice is not continued in years 2 & 3 as required, the Partner shall recover funds for those years.

Eligibility

1-year Contracts (applies to cover crops only): Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not previously meet NRCS standards and specifications. Up to three consecutive contracts may be applied for on the same land.

3-Year Contracts: Eligibility requirements include that planned practices are newly adopted; not previously implemented on the acres by the current owner/operator and did not previously meet NRCS standards and specifications. For cover crops, a second application is eligible if cover crops species or acreage is enhanced.

Incentive Rates:

- **Cover Crops** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 340
 - 1-2 species \$50/acre/year
 - 3+ species \$60/acre/year
 - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively
- **Nutrient Management** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 590

- \$20/acre/year
- Implemented on the same acres annually
- **Prescribed Grazing** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 528
 - \$40/acre/year
 - Implemented on the same acres annually
- **Residue and Tillage Management – No-Till & Strip Till** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 329 for No-Till/Strip-Till
 - \$20/acre/year
 - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively
- **Residue and Tillage Management - Conservation Tillage** - Must follow NRCS Practice Standard 345 for Conservation Till
 - \$10/acre/year
 - Residue cover following a corn crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
 - Residue cover following a soybean crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 30% or greater.
 - Residue cover following a small grain crop at the time of planting the subsequent crop must be 60% or greater.
 - Implementation can occur on different acres within the three-year contract or on the same acres consecutively.
- **Labor Provided by Owners**

Unless specified otherwise by Minnesota prevailing wage statutes, the value of labor, equipment, materials and/or services that are proposed to be provided by the landowner to complete the project shall be estimated at:

 - General Labor rate of \$32/hour; date, times, and activity must be documented
 - Heavy equipment operation such as skid steers, tractors, backhoes and scrapers, including labor, at \$75/hour; date, times, and activity must be documented
 - Other equipment rates as listed on the most recent Iowa State University Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey, at the average price for the activity or machine.
 - Professional or semiprofessional services, such as engineering, estimated at a labor rate of \$100/hour. Date, times, and activity must be documented.
 - Other times: fair market value with prior approval by the SWCD Board.

In-kind labor is non-reimbursable; this is to be used only as match for the grant

Motion by LaSalle to approve proposed policy# 2024-03 – MLSWCD Agricultural Non-Structural Practices. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun.
Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

ii. LCCMR Tree Planting Grant (ID 2022-260)

1. Reimbursement for services for Steve Hughes invoice #2 dated 8/12/2024 in the amount of \$432.20. Previous payments total \$341.79

Motion by Hoefert to approve reimbursement for services to Steve Hughes in the amount of \$432.20 for eligible expenses under contract not to exceed \$2,000. **Second by LaSalle.**

Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

2. Resolution to request LCCMR grant time extension..... **(action)**

LCCMR Tree planting grant P23-2942 will expire May 1, 2025, without an extension. The grant goal can better be achieved if a time extension were granted.

Motion by Hoefert to approve Resolution 2024.02 to request LCCMR approve a time extension for BWSR grant 2022-260. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

Janski inquired about the status of the tree planter. Shaw and Clyne will look into the status.

- 3. Letter of collaboration in USFS grant application **(action)**
A multi-agency effort is underway to apply for US Forest Service grant funds. An application is being developed by BWSR, DNR, The Nature Conservancy and SWCDs to complement the BWSR LCCMR tree planting grant 2022-260 goals. A letter of collaboration is needed to partner in the application.

Motion by Hoefert to approve policy 2024-04 FY24 USFS MLSWCD letter of collaboration. Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

- iii. MDH Well Water Testing FY23 C229294 (info)

- 1. Progress report provided in meeting materials.
- 2. Third and final set of 50 well water test kits were purchased in the amount of \$5,750
Motion by Braun to approve the purchase of a final 50 well water test kits in the amount of \$5,750. **Second by Hoefert.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

- 3. Letter of support for continued ground water project funding submitted to Clean Water Council Board supported the action taken by Administrator Shaw to provide a letter of support for continued funding toward groundwater protection efforts.

- iv. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership (2023-MLSWCD-SOW-PAS-5-AMMENDMENT 8-2024)

- 1. Amendment to deadline and deliverables for existing Statement of Work for Bogus Brook.
Motion by Hoefert to approve 2023-MLSWCD-SOW-PAS-5-AMMENDMENT 8-2024 to extend the project deadline to December 31, 2025. **Second by Braun.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

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

- a. Mille Lacs Lake protection efforts (Lynn Gallice – lead) see staff report
Janski described the event and type of feedback he observed. It was a citizen/landowner led event. Ms. Gallice has received a couple inquiries from shoreland owners resulting from the event.
- b. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead) see also grant progress report
- c. Agriculture/Soil Health **introduce Siena Storm**
Ms. Storm introduced herself and provided a brief background.
- d. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead) see staff report
Ms. Clyne reported a highlight is the headway being made with the MLBO contract. There has been a good response to the outreach event and working with the new watershed land protection specialist.
- e. Community Conversations (Molly Clyne – lead)..... see staff report
Clyne reported her outreach plan was reviewed by the IPC which provided some feedback. Suggestions will be incorporated before the plan goes to the JPE board for approval.
- f. Outreach/Information
 - i. Website/social media (Molly Clyne – lead) **presentation by Molly Clyne**

8. Personnel & District Capacity leadership development

- a. Personnel reviews..... (Administrator/Personnel Committee)
 - i. Mid-year reviews for all employees
The personnel committee reported that reviews were positive. There is good communication and thorough information being provided by the Administrator.

- b. Remote work policy – (tabled in July)..... **(discussion/action)**
Motion by LaSalle to approve policy #2024-05 MLSWCD Telework Policy. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

Tim Braun left the meeting.

- c. Vehicle purchase discussion – Hoefert reported he has identified a couple SUVs available locally for purchase. Shaw recommended waiting to take action until the 2023-year end audit information is available and the 2024 budget profit and loss report is completed, to better anticipate 2024 year-end financial status. Table discussion for review in October.

9. Informational Updates

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning updates
 - i. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP)..... Janski (open)/staff
Next meeting will be a project tour and FY25 work plan approval.
 - ii. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP)..... open (Hoefert)/staff
No meetings
 - iii. Snake River Watershed Management Board (SRWMB)..... open (Hoefert)/staff
 - iv. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Committee (MRSC)..... Campbell (Hoefert)/staff
60-day review just ended, and the next meeting is in December
 - v. Miss/Sartell 1W1P Planning Partnership (MR-Sartell)
 - 1. MOA planning agreement being developed - invitation received..... (info)
- b. Area 3/MASWCD Business..... (Janski-A3 Director)
Janski will attend the MASWCD resolutions committee meeting September 20, 2024, resolutions voting by SWCD needs to be done in October. Janski inquired what process MLSWCD board members want to use for voting? Options include voting as a board during the meeting or voting individually. Members elected to take the resolutions home and vote remotely as done in 2023. Bring questions to the October meeting if needed.
 - i. SWCD Governance 101 – July 16-17 report (Campbell/Braun)
Campbell reported it was a good and useful experience.
 - ii. MASWCD Annual Convention preparation (info)
 - 1. President and Vice-President letters of interest due September 13, 2024 – Janski considering putting his name in for Association vice president.
 - 2. Proposed changes to bylaws-strike two-year term limits – Janski got feedback at the Area 3 meeting approximately. 6 yrs suggested. Will get additional feedback from other areas and bring that input to MASWCD committee.
Registration for the Annual Convention opened today.
 - iii. Area 3 Fall Meeting – September 9-10 report..... (Janski, Campbell, Braun)
Tour of interesting stormwater treatment projects. Appointed officer position. Staff presentations re forestry roles. New managers for Kanabec and Carlton.
- a. Water Management/Workgroups
 - iv. SWCD Engineering Technical Service Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert)
 - v. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group - July 15 & August 19 (Janski/LaSalle)
Last meetings were planning for HLHL event, fine turnout but not remarkable. Good information. Presentation by Aitkin regarding drone survey completed.
 - vi. MN SWCD Forestry Association – July 18.....(LaSalle/Campbell)
LaSalle participated remotely. There is still financial assistance for drought killed seedlings.

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

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Braun)
 - i. JPE Board Meeting and Tour – hosted by ISANTI SWCDSept 26 @ 4:30-7:30

- ii. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) liaison (Janski) Sept 9 @ 12:30
- b. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) JPE Board (Hoefert/Braun) ~~September 23 canceled~~
Next meeting October 28 @ 10:00
- c. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Hoefert/Braun)
Public Hearing – petition to dissolve Nov 6 @ 9:00
- d. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) TBD @ 1-3:00
- e. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Sept 25 @ 10:00
- f. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (Janski/LaSalle)..... Aug 19 @ 10:00
 - i. Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event Sept 7
- g. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) Sept 19 @ 10:00
- h. Area 3/MASWCD meetings
 - i. Area 3 Fall Meeting, Grand Marais (Braun, Campbell, Janski) Sept 9-10
 - ii. MASWCD Annual Convention Dec 2-4
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/QuickBooks (LaSalle) monthly
 - 2. Finance Committee (Hoefert) previously held July 10 @ 4:30
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Personnel Reviews (Janski/LaSalle)..... July 29 @ 3:00
 - 2. Interview panel 1st round (Janski, Braun)..... Aug 1 @ 9:00
 - 3. Interview panel 2nd round (LaSalle, Braun) Aug 8 @ 8:30
 - iii. Conservation (open/Campbell) Feb to prepare for cropping season
 - 1. Rental Equipment management (open/LaSalle) as needed
 - iv. Public Outreach (open/Campbell) TBD
 - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed

11. Supervisor Updates - none

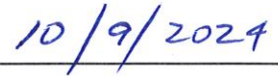
12. Evaluate the Meeting – we had a lot of information to get through

13. Next Regular Meeting – October 9th @ 6:00 PM, Historic Courthouse, Conference Room D with public remote option.

14. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 8:13 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.