



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, November 13, 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

Participating Guests:

Pine SWCD District Administrator, Paul Swanson

Members Absent:

None

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Janski called the meeting to order at 6:01 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.

Several real or perceived conflicts of interest were disclosed.

- 6.c.ii.2 -Robert Hoefert disclosed that he is the landowner applying for funds to cost share a well sealing.
- 6.c.i.6 – Jake Janski disclosed that the landowner requesting cost share for a woodland stewardship plan is a relative.
- 6.c.iv.1 – Tim Braun disclosed that he has interest in applying for soil health funds and policy decisions will apply.

2. Approval of Agenda – (additions and deletions of new business or committee reports)

- additions - 6.c.vii-RIM easement work order 48-24-WO
6.c.viii - January oath of office ceremony ideas

Motion by Hoefert to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. 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. – Paul Swanson, Pine SWCD District Manager introduced himself and noted he was attending to learn and observe.
4. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approve October 9, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes
Motion by Campbell to approve the consent agenda as presented. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
5. **Strategic Planning (no action)**
6. **Organizational Business, Fiscal and Grants governing/decision making items**
 - a. Financial Update (Treasurer/Financial Specialist)
 - i. Ms. Kuhn reviewed details of the transactions and treasurers report.
Motion by LaSalle to approve the treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report which include electronic transfer’s #E24-226 through E24-232 and E24-237 through E24-263, credit card fees and checks written #8121-8130, totaling \$63,831.93 and subject to audit. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - ii. Reconciliation of Bank Statements..... (Finance Committee Member)
LaSalle reported that he reconciled the accounts, and everything made sense including clarification of missing check numbers.
 - iii. Vehicle sale update
Shaw reported that the van was auctioned online through the State of MN government surplus MN Bid system. The winning bid was just over \$500, and they had 10 days to reach out to the SWCD to arrange transfer of title and payment. The bidder did not contact the SWCD so Shaw will work with MN Bid to find out next steps.
 - b. 2025 budget process update
Shaw has not received any response from MLC regarding a decision on the SWCD budget allocation.
 - i. 2025 tree sale expenditure authorization
Kuhn is still finalizing the number and species to order from Wolcyn nursery. Staff are considering reducing the number of trees ordered because we were unable to sell all the trees. Kuhn will check with neighboring districts to see if they are reducing numbers of trees. Half down is expected at the time of order and the remaining after delivery in the spring.
Motion by LaSalle to approve incurring an expenditure up to \$14,000 for the purchase of trees. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - c. Grant Activities
 - i. LCCMR Tree Planting Grant (ID 2022-260) (BWSR grant P23-2942)
 1. **Motion by Hoefert to approve reimbursement payment to Gerald Hutchinson at a flat rate of \$300 under contract P23-2942-WSP-01** for a Woodland Stewardship Plan written, based on a not to exceed rate of \$300 for an eligible plan. **Second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 2. **Motion by Hoefert to approve Contract P23-2942-WSP-04 with Jon Botz** for cost assistance to have a Woodland Stewardship Plan written that would be reimbursed at a flat rate of \$300, based on a not to exceed rate of \$300 for an eligible plan. **Second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 3. Tree planter purchase update:
The grant to reimburse for the purchase of the tree planter expires June 30, 2025. Shaw reported Miller Equipment confirmed we could wait to pick up the tree planter until spring.

They are working with local attorneys to draft a user manual and warranty. They will show us how to operate the machine when we pick it up.

4. Letter of support for a USDA Forest Service FY25 Landscape Scale Restoration grant
This grant would leverage existing grants for forestry funding.

Motion by Campbell to approve the letter of support and commit to approximately \$20,000 staff time match. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

5. Conservation Corp workshop expense (not grant eligible)
Shaw explained that the \$577.23 bill for food expenses was determined to not be eligible for reimbursement with LCCMR grant funds. An amendment made to the grant to cover workshop food expenses was specific to a forest plan writer workshop and could not be applied to this forestry careers workshop. The workshop was well attended and evaluated to be successful. It is summarized in Ms. Clyne's staff report.

Motion by Hoefert to approve payment of the workshop food expenses from general funds. Second by Braun. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

6. **Motion by Hoefert to approve Contract P23-2942-WSP-05:** Application by David Dockendorf for cost assistance to have a Woodland Stewardship Plan written that would be reimbursed at a flat rate of \$300, based on a not to exceed rate of \$300 for an eligible plan. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

ii. BWSR WBIF Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership

1. **Motion by Campbell to approve the** Statement of Work agreement with the SRWPP for well sealing project funding: SRWP-WBIF-01-MLSWCD-2024. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. **Abstain:** Hoefert. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
2. **Motion by LaSalle to authorize contract # SR-WBIF-01-MLSWCD-2024** for Robert Hoefert to seal an abandoned well in an amount not to exceed \$1,638.75 based on 75% of the eligible cost of \$2,185.00. **Second by Braun.** Affirmative: LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. **Abstain:** Hoefert Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

iii. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership (SOW 2023-MLSWCD-UBMP-3)

1. **Motion by Campbell to approve amending contract WBIFC23-3265-1 pending landowner and technical staff signoff,** for the gully stabilization stormwater control project for Paul and Wynette Rodriguez, to **increase the cost share to an amount not to exceed \$18,299.25** based on 75% of the estimated eligible cost of an updated design cost of \$24,399.00 and **extend the contract installation deadline to 11/30/2025.** **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

iv. BWSR Soil Health

1. Non-structural practices draft prioritization and ranking policy
Ms. Storm provided a draft prioritization/eligibility framework that would be used to target funding for soil health practices to particular high priority fields. Suggestions from the board were to clarify the purpose as prioritization vs eligibility and to set a cap to funding that could be received per producer/applicant. The board requested staff bring a funding cap suggestion to the December board meeting for consideration. **Tabled.**

v. BWSR Buffer Law Implementation – compliance status update

Ms. Storm plans to contact approximately 12 landowners requesting a site visit to confirm compliance with the buffer law. Storm is unable to determine from an aerial review if these fields meet compliance requirements. Shaw explained that the fields may not be out of compliance, but the SWCD is not able to determine solely from an aerial photo review, a site visit is needed.

- vi. MDA Noxious Weed grant – application submitted requesting GPS equipment and funding to pay for an intern to update the inventory of noxious weeds on county and township right of ways
- vii. RIM Easement Work Order 48-24-WO99 – authorization to sign
Motion by Hoefert to approve administrator to execute RIM Easement Work Order 48-24-WO99 Second by Campbell. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
- viii. January oath of office ceremony ideas
 Shaw asked the board if there was any interest in doing a joint oath of office/swearing in ceremony for both County Commissioner and SWCD elected officials. Each board is independent but both boards function within the same geopolitical boundary and both share various responsibilities in managing natural resources for the community. Maybe this gesture would set a tone for building familiarity between the two boards. The SWCD Board expressed interest in exploring the idea with the County.

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

- 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 (Siena Storm – lead)..... see staff report
- d. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)..... see staff report
- e. Community Conversations (Molly Clyne – lead) see staff report
- f. Financial administration (Pam Kuhn – lead) see staff report
- g. Administration/management (Susan Shaw – lead)..... see staff report
 - i. Input provided to MLC Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - ii. Input provided for article on SWCD no-till programs <https://www.projectoptimist.us/rental-programs-help-minnesota-farmers-test-drive-no-till/>

8. Personnel & District Capacity

9. Informational Updates

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning updates
 - i. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP).....Janski (Braun)/staff
 - ii. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP).....Hoefert (Braun)/staff
 - iii. Snake River Watershed Management Board (SRWMB).....Hoefert (Braun)/staff
 The board officially acted to dissolve the organization. The MLSWCD will post the final notice on the webpage the MLSWCD hosts for the organization. MLSWCD staff will submit a final invoice the SRWMB for webpage management time.
 - iv. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Committee (MRSC)..... Campbell (Hoefert)/staff
 - 1. Authorization for the MSRC policy committee to send draft plan to BWSR.
 Draft plan available for review: <https://www.millelacsswcd.org/mississippi-river-st-cloud-watershed/>
Motion by Campbell to authorize sending the draft Miss/St. Cloud Comprehensive Watershed Plan to BWSR. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - 2. Public hearing on the draft MRSC watershed management plan – Dec 5, 11AM
 - v. Miss/Sartell 1W1P Planning Partnership (MR-Sartell)
- b. Area 3/MASWCD Business..... (Janski-A3 Director)
 Janski reported activities from the last MASWCD board meeting included preparation for the convention. The association 2025 budget will reflect an approximate \$340 increase for district dues. Planning was done to formalize the Area meeting schedules to consolidate the schedule of when meetings are held to make it easier for MASWCD staff to attend. Jake will host an Area 3 networking meeting at the convention and invited other Area Directors to do the same.
- a. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (Oct 18 report)..... (Janski)

Janski reported the Oct 18 meeting was held at the MLBO government center. Much of the discussion was about planning the next Healthy Land, Healthy Lake (HLHL) event which will be held early May next year in Wahkon. They are reaching out to SWCDs for technical staff participation. The group was tangentially involved in the Lake Mille Lacs trash survey. Lots of articles and news stories highlighted the event which was held in part to secure funding to do a cleanup of debris found. Because the lake is flat and shallow most light trash moves to shore. Trash hot spots were identified where ice fishing is most active. Aitkin SWCD may reach out to partner SWCDs for funding.

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

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Braun)Dec 19 @ 4:30
 - i. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) liaison (Janski)Dec 9 meeting
 - ii. Rum River Watershed Plan Refresher (reminder) Nov 18 @ 12:30
- b. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) JPE Board (Hoefert/Braun) canceled ~~Nov 25 @ 10:30~~Dec 23 @ 10:30
- c. Snake River Watershed CAC & Board Meeting (Hoefert/Braun)voted to dissolve
- d. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert) Dec 5 @ 11-1:00
- e. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Jan 22 @ 10:00
- f. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (Janski/LaSalle).....Dec 16 @ 10:00
- g. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) Nov 21 @ 10:00
- h. Area 3/MASWCD meetings
 - i. MASWCD Annual Convention (Janski, Braun) Dec 2-4
 - ii. Legislative Day at the Capitol reporttbd
- i. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/QuickBooks (LaSalle)monthly
 - 2. Finance CommitteeTBD before Dec mtg
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Personnel ReviewsTBD before Dec mtg
 - iii. Conservation (LaSalle/Campbell)
 - 1. Rental Equipment management (Braun) as needed
 - iv. Public Outreach (LaSalle/Campbell)
 - v. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed

11. Supervisor Updates

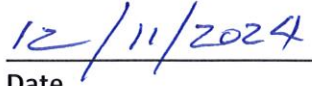
12. Evaluate the Meeting

13. Next Regular Meeting – December 11, 2024, at 6:00 PM, Historic Courthouse, Conference Rm D with public remote option.

14. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:46 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.