



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, December 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

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Financial Specialist, Pam Kuhn

Participating Guests:

Commissioner Liaison, Genny Reynolds

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance– Chair Janski 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.

- 6.d.ii.2 - Jake Janski disclosed that the landowner is a relative.

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

- additions - 6.d.ii.4 LCCMR reimbursement under contract P23-2942-WSP-04
- deletions - _____

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. – no public comment

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve November 13, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. Information Only: Partner Reports, Project Summaries, News Releases

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

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 Braun to approve the treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report which include electronic transfer’s #E24-267 - E24-288, credit card fees and checks written #8131-8135, totaling \$35,862.24 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.

- iii. Rental program – winter storage fee \$400 for 3 machines

Motion by Hoefert to approve payment to John Otten in the amount of \$400 for winter storage of the two no-till drills and tree planter. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

- iv. Vehicle updates

- 1. 2006 Dodge Caravan sale complete in the amount of \$460.

- 2. Vehicle purchase

Motion by LaSalle to approve the Administrator to proceed with purchase of a Chevy Traverse from the Mille Lacs County fleet in an amount reasonably within what was budgeted to replace a vehicle. **Second by Braun.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

- 3. 2016 GMC Sierra needs new tires. Estimates provided.

Motion by Hoefert to approve purchase of the more off-road type tires for the estimated price of \$939.45 for mount and balance. **Second by LaSalle.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

b. 2025 budget process update

- i. Finance Committee report - LaSalle reported that Shaw provided the best figures she has at this time. She reviewed the grants we have, what funds are anticipated to be used by year end 2024 or available for 2025. There is a plan for a reasonable budget to purchase deferred equipment like computers or cell phones for the office so employees don’t have to use personal phones. The reasons a firm budget cannot be set at this time include not having a firm allocation figure from Mille Lacs County yet, and December grant expenses are not calculated yet. Hoefert was very satisfied that Shaw explained things well and that there are lots of fluid figures that by next meeting should be firmed up.

c. Newly elected official swearing in ceremony plan

The Mille Lacs County board responded favorably to the idea of a joint swearing in ceremony between the County board and SWCD board on Tuesday, January 7th.

d. Grant Activities

- i. BWSR Soil Health(Storm)

- 1. Non-structural practices draft prioritization and ranking policy **(discussion/action)**

Ms. Storm provided a table outlining the proposed funding limits for soil health practices.

Braun said he favors the price cap vs an acre cap. The cap is appropriate for the funding we have available. If additional funding becomes available, the SWCD should consider the flexibility to modify. Shaw asked if the rates proposed are marketable. Braun felt they are attractive to farmers who are likely already interested in testing soil health practices. But not if they don't already have the real desire. The rates are enough to persuade people that don't have the resources but do have the desire.

Motion by Hoefert to approve the MLSWCD ag non-structural practices prioritization and ranking policy 2024-06. **Second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

ii. LCCMR Tree Planting Grant (ID 2022-260) (BWSR grant P23-2942)

1. Contract P23-2942-WSP-02: **Motion by Hoefert to approve reimbursement payment to Mark Johnson** at a flat rate of \$300 under contract P23-2942-WSP-02 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. Contract P23-2942-WSP-05: **Motion by Braun to approve reimbursement payment to David Dockendorf** at a flat rate of \$300 under contract P23-2942-WSP-05 for a Woodland Stewardship Plan written, based on a not to exceed rate of \$300 for an eligible plan. **Second by Hoefert.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
3. Contract P23-2942-WSP-06: **Motion by LaSalle to approve contract P23-2942-WSP-06 with Dennis Havel** 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 Braun.** Affirmative: Hoefert, LaSalle, Campbell, Braun. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
4. Contract P23-2942-WSP-04: **Motion by Braun to approve reimbursement payment to Jon Botz** at a flat rate of \$300 under contract P23-2942-WSP-04 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.**

iii. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership

1. **Motion by LaSalle** to approve amendment to extend contract 2023-MLSWCD-SOW-AC-6 until 12/31/2025. **Second by Hoefert.** 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)no new info
- b. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)no new info
- 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. Outreach/Information
 - i. Conservation tree sale (Pam Kuhn – lead)update to be provided
Ms. Kuhn reported she decreased the quantity of trees we are ordering from 8,250 to 7,000 because we were unable to sell them all in 2024 and we want to avoid that. While we have reduced the quantity overall, we have increased the variety of species. Ms. Kuhn checked with surrounding SWCDs and found it was a common problem having unsold trees in 2024. Given the purchase cost of trees, we propose to increase the price from \$70 to \$73 for the 2025 tree sale. Estimated profit would be approximately \$2,500. This accounts for all expenses and staff time at the billable rate. The sale will go live the first week in January. Tree pick up will be May 1, 2025.
Janski suggested staff investigate what would be needed for future sales to be done as online orders.
 - ii. Website/social media (Molly Clyne – lead)no new info

8. Personnel & District Capacity

9. Informational Updates

- a. Comprehensive Watershed Planning updates
 - i. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP).....Janski (Braun)/staff
The outreach team is planning a well testing and info event to occur simultaneously throughout the watershed during groundwater week.
The IPC approved funding requests to partners and listened to a DNR hydrology presentation summarizing data and changes to peak and baseline stream flows over the past couple decades.
The outreach team has now posted material available for public use on the Rum partnership webpage. Planning to do a series of DIY webinars. The first one planned will be about tree planting.
 - ii. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP)Hoefert (Braun)/staff
 - iii. Miss/St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Committee (MRSC) Campbell (Hoefert)/staff
The planning board held a public hearing on the plan. One person came to talk which will result in an amendment. The board approved the draft plan to go to BWSR. A joint powers agreement to form an implementation entity might be approved by spring.
 - iv. Miss/Sartell 1W1P Planning Partnership (MR-Sartell)

LaSalle needed to leave the meeting early.

- b. Area 3/MASWCD Business..... (Janski-A3 Director)
 - i. MASWCD Convention report.....(Janski/Shaw)
Janski reported that as Area 3 Director he is attending the board meetings of every SWCD in A3 over next few months to learn. He has found that each board runs meetings very differently. He will bring ideas back to our board.

Janski reported the MASWCD annual convention was run really well. Michele, the association events coordinator, does a great job. A dues increase was approved. Bylaw changes were made to term limits in order to give new officers time to learn about the role but providing a cap to prevent stifling new people in roles.
- c. Water Management/Workgroups
 - i. SWCD Engineering Technical Service Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert)
 - ii. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (Janski/LaSalle)
 - iii. MN SWCD Forestry Association(LaSalle/Campbell)

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

- a. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) JPE Board (Janski/Braun) both attend Dec 19 @ 4:30
- b. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) JPE Board (Hoefert/Braun) Dec 30 @ 9:30
- c. Mississippi-St. Cloud Watershed Policy Committee (Campbell/Hoefert)
- d. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Jan 22 @ 10:00
- e. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (Janski/LaSalle)..... Dec 16 @ 10:00
 - i. Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event May 3, 2025
- f. SWCD Forestry Association (LaSalle/Campbell) Jan 16 @ 10:00
- g. Area 3/MASWCD meetings
 - i. Area 3 Resolutions Meeting, Cloquet Forestry Ctr.....June 6, 2025
 - ii. Area 3 Fall Meeting, Kanabec SWCD HostsSept 8, 2025
- h. Internal Operational Committee Meetings
 - i. Finance (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) monthly
 - 2. Finance Committee Dec 11
 - ii. Personnel (Janski/LaSalle)
 - 1. Personnel ReviewsDec 19

iii. Conservation (LaSalle/Campbell)

1. Rental Equipment management (Braun) as needed

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

11. Supervisor Updates - none

12. Evaluate the Meeting – nice and quick

13. Next Regular Meeting – January 8, 2025, 6PM, Historic Courthouse, Conf Rm D w/public remote option

Janski suggested board members consider committee assignments, officer roles and compensation rates for action to be taken at the January organizational meeting. Janski noted that some SWCDs do two-year officer and committee terms, so we don't have to do this every year.

14. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:21PM



Tim Braun, Mille Lacs SWCD Secretary

1-8-25

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.