



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)
(BMP) Best Management Practice
(BWSR) Board of Water & Soil Resources
(CWF) Clean Water Fund
(FSP) Forest Stewardship Plan
(JAA) Job Approval Authority
(JPA, E or C) Joint Powers Agreement, Entity or Collaborative)
(RRWP) Rum River Watershed Partnership
(MRSC) Mississippi River St. Cloud
(SRWPP) Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership
(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
(TSA 3) Technical Service Area 3 – SWCD Engineering
(MAWQCP) MN Ag. Water Quality Certification Program
(WBIF) Watershed Based Implementation Funds
(WCA) Wetland Conservation Act
(WSP) Woodland Stewardship Plan

Mille Lacs SWCD Board Meeting – MINUTES
Wednesday, April 9, 2025

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

Members Present:

Chair, Jake Janski, District 3
Vice-Chair, Dan Campbell, District 1 (remotely)
Treasurer, Andre LaSalle, District 4
Secretary, Tim Braun, District 2
Member, Robert Hoefert, District 5

Members Absent: None

Staff Present:

District Administrator, Susan Shaw

Participating Guests:

Commissioner Liaison, Jay Munson
NRCS District Conservationist, Barb Zeroth

Supervisor Dan Campbell (District 1) attended remotely from a public location at 191 Mattie Avenue, Hillsboro NM 88042.

Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Janski called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM

1. Conflict of Interest Declaration

Policy 2025-01: A conflict of interest whether actual or perceived occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests and these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially.

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.

Campbell declared that he did not have any conflicts of interest.

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

No additions or deletions, however under item 6. Strategic Implementation A. Rum River Watershed, the board will begin with item 8.a Forestry, to allow our speaker to present early in the meeting.

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

3. Open Public Forum

Policy 2025-02: Board policy limits public forum time for board meeting topics not scheduled within the agenda to 2 minutes per person but allows time extension by board vote.

Barb Zeroth reported the Federal IRA funds are still paused but hopefully EQIP will be funded. Benton SWCD employee Nathan Sanoski, who did CRP for Mille Lacs & Benton has left his position, so the work will shift to NRCS. Typically, NRCS does not consider there to be a lot of CRP in Mille Lacs County due to limited cropping history eligibility requirements.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approve March 12, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
- B. Supervisor 1st quarter compensation report
- C. Information Only: Partner Reports

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

5. Organizational Business

- A. NRCS/SWCD Memorandum of Understanding: Freedom of Information Act/Civil Rights (tabled)
- B. Strategic Planning (discussion/action)

Janski reported that Shaw and he met to discuss how to do a non-laborious strategic planning exercise given the Civic Governance policy and Priority framework that our district has adopted. We will wait for all supervisors to be in person and then address one implementation priority item per meeting over a few months. Susan has developed an exercise for the board designed in accordance with our Civic Governance pilot program to help the board determine if we see value in the process. The exercise will both bring the board through strategic planning but will also help the board engage in using the civic policy framework. So, starting next month, we plan to carve out 30 minutes of the meeting and dive into each priority area. Shaw will send information in advance and have a staff person present whose work area is relevant to the implementation priority, to hear our analysis.

6. Strategic Implementation

A. Rum River Watershed

- 1. Partnership (RRWP) Board - Janski (Braun)/staff..... board rep/staff report
Braun attended to represent MLSWCD. The meeting was well attended. The board chose a project sign design. Sam Seybold of Aitkin SWCD gave a presentation on the drone project. Sherburne SWCD presented a watershed project implementation tracking program.
 - a. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC)
- 2. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee (LaSalle/Campbell)
- 3. Watershed-wide Community Conversations (Molly Clyne – lead)
 - a. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership (SOW EI-4)
 - b. NWTF superfund grant
 - c. Soil Health Education grant
- 4. Private lands protection/easement creation (Molly Clyne/Doug Page – leads)
- 5. Mille Lacs Lake protection efforts (Lynn Gallice – lead)
 - a. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group – (Janski) committee report
An in-person meeting was held on April 25 to do strategic planning and prepare for the Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event. Gallice will be at the event to assist.
 - b. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership projects
 - i. Mille Lacs Lake project development (SOW PD-1)
 - ii. BWSR WBIF RRWP (SOW UBMP-3)(action pending signatures)

Motion by Hoefert to approve cost share contract WBIFC23-3265-4 with Mille Lacs County for a stormwater control project in an amount not to exceed \$23,913.75 based on 75% of the eligible cost of \$31,885, pending landowner and technical signatures. Second by LaSalle. Affirmative: LaSalle, Braun, Hoefert, Campbell. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

6. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)
 - a. Central ML Co Targeted Well Sealing FY23 grant (C23-6045)
 - b. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership projects see staff report
 - i. Well sealing (SOW 2023 well sealing & groundwater PD) **(action)**
Motion by Braun to approve contract WBIFC23-3265-5 with Mille Lacs County to seal an abandoned well on a tax forfeit property in an amount not to exceed \$1,650.00 based on 60% of the eligible cost of \$2,750.00. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: LaSalle, Braun, Hoefert, Campbell. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - c. MDH Well water testing grant FY23
 - d. MDH Well water testing grant FY25 application
7. Agriculture/Soil Health (Siena Storm – lead)
 - a. No-till equipment..... see staff report
 - b. Equipment liaison (Braun) – maintenance needed liaison report
 Braun reported he had looked at the drills. Truax looks like it’s been repaired recently. The Tye needs new coulters and to 8-10 of the 11 bearings. Repairs could cost about \$1,600. LaSalle question if both drills were necessary. Braun and Shaw reported that each has different niche uses. Braun could do the repairs but they would be time-consuming so he would want to bill for repairs. Shaw reported she suggests staff get a couple of estimates on the repairs and proceed from there.

Motion by Hoefert to authorize staff to get bids for parts and labor at \$1,600 and to authorize Shaw to pick an estimate go ahead with repairs. Affirmative: LaSalle, Hoefert, Campbell. Opposed: none. Bruan abstained. **Motion carried.**
 - c. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership projects
 - i. Bogus Brook feedlot management (SOW PAS5)
 - ii. West Branch & Bogus Brook landowner interest survey (SOW PD-1)
 - iii. Bogus Brook drainage management (SOW PD-1)
 - iv. Soil Health promotion (SOW PD-1)
 - v. Soil Health Cost Share Practices (SOW Soil Health)
 - d. MDA MAWQCP
 - e. Soil Health cost share FY23
 - f. Soil Health Staffing grant FY24 see staff report
 - g. Soil Health Delivery FY25
8. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)
 - a. MN SWCD Forestry Association (Hoefert)..... committee report
 Hoefert attended the meeting and found it interesting. They did the election of officers. The presentation included info on forest carbon sequestration. Hoefert’s evaluation of the meeting was that it seemed worthwhile to go but a person working in forestry would get more out of it than a supervisor. Learned the governor has proposed reducing the SFIA payments. The forestry association is interested in opposing that reduction. Information also included the economic impacts of conservation. DNR nursery in Badura had a representative at the meeting who provided a report.

 MASWCD Liaison (Janski) reported Koochiching SWCD is proposing to put a forestry resolution forward that advocates for increasing SFIA funding to avoid existing SFAI covenants from opting out.
 - b. BWSR WBIF Rum River Watershed Partnership
 - i. Forestry Stewardship Coordination (SOW EI-4)
 - c. LCCMR Tree Planting Grant (ID 2022-260) **presentation by Molly Clyne**
 - i. **Motion by Hoefert to approve** Contract P23-2942-WSP-11with Craig Sanders 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: Affirmative: LaSalle, Braun, Hoefert, Campbell. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**
 - d. Tree planter equipment rental program

e. US FWS NOFO 3 grant (under federal hold)

B. Snake River Watershed

1. Plan Partnership (SRWPP) Board - Hoefert (Braun)/staff board rep/staff report
Canceled – no report
 - a. Steering Committee report
2. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee (LaSalle/Campbell)
3. Stream/shoreland protection (Lynn Gallice – lead)
4. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)
5. Agriculture/Soil Health (Siena Storm – lead)
 - a. Outreach/project development (SRWPP WBIF FY24)
6. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)
 - a. Outreach/project development (SRWPP WBIF FY24)

C. Miss/St. Cloud Watershed (MRSC)

1. Partnership Board - Campbell (Hoefert)/staff..... board rep/staff report
Campbell reported the first meeting of the JPE. The election of officers was done. The group will be called the Mississippi River St.-Cloud Watershed Entity (MRSCWE). The established 2 more meetings, May 1 and June 5th to approve watershed bylaws, review with attorneys and establish officer terms that match the JPA language. Document draft mirrors the Rum watershed bylaws.
 - a. Steering Committee report (Siena Storm – lead)
2. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee (LaSalle/Campbell)
3. Stream/shoreland protection
 - a. BWSR WBIF MRSC FY25 - Battle Brook (Siena Storm– lead)
4. Groundwater/drinking water safety (Lynn Gallice – lead)
5. Agriculture/Soil Health (Siena Storm – lead)
 - a. BWSR WBIF MRSC FY25 – Nonstructural soil health management
6. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)
 - a. BWSR WBIF MRSC FY25

D. Miss/Sartell (MR-Sartell) 1W1P Planning Partnership no planning role

1. Forestry (Molly Clyne – lead)

E. Other Programs and Grants

1. Promotional Efforts/Information/Outreach
 - a. Conservation/Public Outreach Committee - LaSalle & Campbell (Janski)
 - b. Conservation tree sale (Pam Kuhn – lead).....report
2. Area 3 Envirothon program – event to be held May 5thinfo
3. BWSR Reinvest in MN (RIM) Easement Stewardship (Siena Storm – lead)
4. BWSR Buffer Law Implementation (Siena Storm – lead) see staff report
5. DNR Observation Well Monitoring (Siena Storm – lead)
6. Mille Lacs County Ag Inspector (Lynn Gallice – lead).....Shaw update
Shaw has met with the County Administrator and made plans to provide a program overview to the Mille Lacs County board and new commissioners.
7. Irrigation Practices to Protect GW Quality & Quantity RCPP (Gallice – lead)
8. Wetlands Conservation Act
 - a. TEP and Restoration Orders (Shaw/Storm – leads)
 - b. Outreach/Community Conversations (Clyne – lead)
9. Agricultural BMP Loan Program (Gallice – lead)

7. District Capacity & Leadership Development (20 min.)

A. Personnel

1. Personnel Committee (Janski/LaSalle)
2. Employee handbook policy changes (table to May)
3. MASWCD District Manager Leadership Development Cohort

- B. SWCD Board
 - 1. SWCD Engineering Technical Service Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) committee report
LaSalle reported the TSA engineering tech position was opened, they had applicants, made an offer, the offer was declined, and now they will readvertise. Project reports were provided. TSA has four projects in various stages with MLSWCD.
 - 2. Government Relations Committee (Janski/Braun)
 - 3. MASWCD/NE Area 3 Business (Janski-A3 Director)report
Call for resolutions. Janski’s message to Area 3 SWCDs is that if we have an issue and an idea for resolution, we should already be working on developing resolutions year-round vs waiting until the month before the voting meeting. The meeting will be June 6th. Shaw reported staff will attend.
 - a. MASWCD Legislative Day at the Capitol (Gov Relations Cmte)
 - b. MASWCD NE Area 3 Resolutions process..... discussion
 - c. NE Area 3 Fall meeting
 - d. MASWCD Annual Convention
 - 4. One on One meetings with the Administrator
 - 5. General Supervisor updates.....info
- C. Civic Partnership Development (Molly Clyne – lead)

8. Fiscal Capacity

- A. Financial update..... (Financial Specialist)
 - 1. **Motion by LaSalle. to approve the treasurer’s report and monthly transactions report which include electronic transfer’s #E25-51 through E25-81, credit card fees and checks written #8175-8182, totaling \$96,146.11 and subject to audit. Second by Hoefert. Affirmative: LaSalle, Braun, Hoefert, Campbell. Opposed: none. Motion carried.**
 - 2. Quarterly Budget to Actual.....report
 - 3. Quarterly Budget to Actualreport
 - 4. Reconciliation of Bank Statements (Treasurer)report
Shaw did the reconciliation and LaSalle reviewed.
 - 5. Finance Committee (LaSalle/Hoefert)..... committee report

9. Approved SWCD Meetings & Events

Motion by LaSalle. to approve supervisor attendance/reimbursement for the following meetings. Second by **Braun.** Affirmative: LaSalle, Bruan, Hoefert, Campbell. Opposed: none. **Motion carried.**

Internal Operational Committees

- A. Finance Committee (Hoefert/LaSalle)
 - 1. Statement reconciliation w/Quickbooks (LaSalle) monthly
- B. Personnel Committee (Janski/LaSalle)
- C. Conservation/Public Outreach (LaSalle/Campbell)
- D. Equipment liaison (Braun) March repairs done
- E. Government Relations..... as needed
- F. One on One Meetings with Administrator please schedule monthly as needed

Partnership Boards

- G. Rum River Watershed Partnership (RRWP) Board (Janski/Braun) June 26 @ 4:30
 - 1. Implementation Planning Committee (IPC) liaison (Janski) May canceled
- H. Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership (SRWPP) Board (**Hoefert/Braun**)(tentative) Apr 28 @ 9:30
- I. Mississippi River St. Cloud Watershed Entity (**Campbell/Braun**) **tbd** May 1 @ 11:00
- J. TSA Area 3 (LaSalle/Hoefert) Jun 25 @ 10:00

Voluntary Membership Boards

- K. Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group (Janski/LaSalle)..... Friday, Apr 25 @ 10:00
 - 1. Healthy Land, Healthy Lake event (Janski attending for work not SWCD) May 3, 2025
- L. MN SWCD Forestry Association (Hoefert) May 15 @ 10:00

M. Area 3 Envirothon (Janski may attend on behalf of A3) May 5

State and Regional Association Meetings

N. MASWCD/NE Area 3 Meetings

- 1. NE Area 3 Resolutions Meeting, Cloquet Forestry Ctr June 6, 2025
- 2. NE Area 3 Fall Meeting, Kanabec SWCD Hosts Sept 8, 2025

10. Evaluate the Meeting: Janski asked if simply referencing staff reports was adequate or if board members would prefer to dig into the staff report at the meeting. LaSalle said that he will ask if he has a question.

11. Next Regular Meeting – May 14, 6PM, Historic Courthouse, Conference Rm D w/public remote option.
During Historic Courthouse construction through May 2025, the building will be accessible but disrupted.

12. Adjourn – Chair Janski adjourned the meeting at 7:53PM



Tim Braun, Mille Lacs SWCD Board Secretary

6-11-25

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.