

# Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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## Minutes of the September 17, 2024

Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

*The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 7:15 PM.*

**Members Present:** Larry Scherger, Chair  
Rick Alberts, Vice-Chair  
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer  
David Livingston, Secretary

**Members Absent:** Bruce Freerksen, PR&I

**Others Present:** Adam King, District Manager, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District; Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service; Allison English, Administrative Professional, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda:** There were 5 additions to the September 17, 2024 board meeting agenda. The additions include FY25 Buffer Law Implementation Grant Agreement, Watershed Cost- Share Contact 2024 WAGZ-DC- 17 (Koop) Encumbrance, Watershed Cost- Share Contract 2024WAGZ- DC- 13 (Gibbs) Payment, Watershed Cost- Share Contract Amendment 2023WAGZ- DC- 06 (Mark Finstuen), and Watershed Contract Amendment 2023WAGZ- DC- 07 (Derek Finstuen). A motion was made to approve the September 17, 2024 meeting agenda as amended.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the  
August 20, 2024  
Board Meeting Minutes:**

The supervisors discussed the August 20, 2024 board meeting minute. There was two corrections. Corrections include changing the spelling of "Fahaning" to "Fahning" on page 2 in the first paragraph under 'Short Term Disability and Life Insurance Coverage', and removing the word 'there' after where and before they in the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence under 'David Livingston Supervisor Report'. A motion was made to approve the August 20, 2024 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District's Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes, as corrected.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

## Partner Agency Reports

### **Natural Resource Conservation Service Report**

Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), reported he attended an equipment demonstration with Zac Colton. The demonstration's turnout was very good – with a mixture of landowners and multiple countries had representatives in attendance. The demonstration included a drill, vertical till inter-seeder from Rice County, a modified planter, a high-speed rotary hoe, and a drone used to put on cover crops. The supervisors discussed the differences between Dodge and Rice Counties' inter-seeders and discussed the new technology of drones being used for cover crops. Bird also provided that CRP is on hold until there is a new farm bill approved or an extension to the current one. The September 10<sup>th</sup> deadline for grassed waterways was met, although there are a couple of basins still being constructed. Bird also shared that Luke Bowe, Soil Conservationist, started in the office this week.

### **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Report**

Jill Sackett Eberhart, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, was unable to attend the meeting.

### **Dodge County Commissioner's Report**

John Allen, Dodge County District I Commissioner, was unable to attend the meeting.

## Treasurer's Report

### **Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Statements, Payment of New Bills**

Glenn Hahn, Treasure, presented the August 2024 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$10,246.61, expenditures of \$29,132.636, the general ledger and aging summary, with a payables total of \$12,694.96. Hahn made note of the large amount due from other governments on the balance sheet. King addressed that we are still waiting on payment of large invoices totaling \$74,999.08. The supervisors discussed the treasurer's report.

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors about number 10 on September 2024 Payables- a USPS charge of \$53.42. Updated W2-C (2021-2023), W3-C (2021-2023), and 941-X (2023-2024)'s was needed due to an error during reporting federal annual income. The error was discovered during the 2023 audit and it has since been resolved and taxes going forward will be correctly reported. This error effected multiple employees and will cost each employee a re-filing fee – 2021(4 employees), 2022 (3 employees), 2023 (3 employees) and they will need to file the W2-Cs for each year which will run a cost to the employee. The supervisors discussed if the district will cover the full or a percentage of the additional re-filing fees. The supervisors would like additional information on the cost before deciding how much the district will reimburse. This item has been tabled until more information is gathered.

A motion was made to approve the August 2024 Treasurer's Report and pay bills on the aging summary, for a payables total of \$12,694.96.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Certificate of Deposit Renewal-**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors the Certificate of Deposit (CD) is set to mature on 9/18/2024. The district's CD is currently in a 5-month term with a 5.05% interest rate. The supervisors discussed the length for the next term and if the interest should be accrued as revenue or added to the balance of the Certificate of Deposit (CD). A motion was made to renew the Certificate of Deposit for a 11-month term at a 4.75 interest rate and to accrue the interest as revenue and just reinvest the original amount of \$100,000.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Equipment Purchase – Straw Crimper Discussion**

Adam King, District Manager, presented to the board information he gathered from Chris Fritz in Goodhue about their straw crimper. The straw crimper in Goodhue is over 30 years old and still running well, the crimper was well taken care of and stored well. The straw crimper is not used as much as it used to be. Goodhue's district charges \$50 per day for in county rental / \$100 per day for out of county rental. The district uses the straw crimper to do the straw for no cost when being used in waterways designed by the district. The supervisor's discussed the straw crimper and would like King to gather quotes from a couple of sources as well as gather information on transportation and upkeep costs. The equipment purchase of a straw crimper has been tabled.

### **New Business**

#### **Medsurety Master Administration Agreement**

Adam King presented the Medsurety Master Administration Agreement. The supervisors discussed the new HSA agreement for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District employees. A motion was made to pay the one-time yearly administrative cost of \$750, to pay the \$25 per month cost, and authorizing Adam King, District Manager, to sign the agreement with Medsurety.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **FY25 Conservation Contracts Grant Closeout**

The supervisors discussed the FY25 Conservation Contracts Grant Closeout. The total of the grant was \$12,697 with \$13,771.89 being spent. All funds were used on technical assistance for conservation projects and no funds will be returned to the Board of Water and Soil Resources. A Motion was made to close out the FY25 Conservation Contract Grant.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **FY25 Soil Health Delivery Grant Workplan**

The FY25 Soil Health Cost Share Delivery Grant of \$60,000 has been received. This is significantly increased from \$14,175 received from the FY24 Soil Health Cost- Share Grant. The Board of Soil and Water Resources allows the district to adjust up to 10% of the workplan without approval. Adam King, District manager has proposed \$55,000 to be allocated for the Dodge County Cover Crops Program and \$5,000 to be allocated towards staff time. The money allocated towards staff time has the ability to be moved to the Dodge Cover Crops Program if needed in the future. A motion was made to approve the proposed workplan of \$55,000 for the Dodge County Cover Crop Program and \$5,000 for staff time for Soil Health Staffing.

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**SUPERVISORS: RICK ALBERTS – BRUCE FREERKSEN– LARRY SCHERGER – DAVID LIVINGSTON – GLENN HAHN**

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: Rick Alberts  
The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Dodge Cover Crop Program**

Adam King, District Manager, presented to the supervisors the staff's interest in a cover crop program where the district would work with both the landowner and contractors (whomever is doing the labor) to be paid for putting the cover crops in the field. The FY25 Soil Health Delivery grant would be used to fund this program. The supervisor's discussed the possible pros and cons of this proposed program and how it would work with the existing contracts. King stated that Faribault SWCD has done a similar program. The Supervisor's would like more details on this program and King is going to reach out to Faribault SWCD. The Dodge Cover Crop Program has been tabled.

#### **Technology Subscriptions for 2025**

Technology Subscriptions costs are up for renewal for 2025. Weworked increased due to additional staff. DocuSign, Microsoft, and Adobe Acrobat Pro stayed the same from 2024. Quickbooks Desktop increased by about \$60 and Quickbooks Payroll have increased by about \$194 from 2024. Canva Teams increased in cost due to the number of users increasing and the company switching us from Canva Pro to Canva Teams. King proposed we use one user login for the district to decrease the cost and downgrade to Canva Pro. A motion was made to continue using WeWorked, DocuSign, Microsoft, Adobe Acrobat Pro, Quickbooks Desktop and Payroll, and to reduce Canva Teams to Canvas Pro.

Motion: Glen Hahn  
Seconded: David Livingston  
The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Training Request- BWSR Academy**

The 2024 Board of Water and Soil Resource Academy will be held on Tuesday, October 29 through Thursday, October 31, 2024 at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd, Minnesota. Registration is \$75 per day and lodging will be needed. A motion was made to approve any staff that would like to attend the 2024 BWSR Academy at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd, MN and the acquired costs to be covered.

Motion: Rick Alberts  
Seconded: David Livingston  
The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC- 16 (Alberts) Encumbrance**

Albert Brothers LLP of Pine Island, MN has requested cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340 – cover crop project in Section 11 of Milton Township. The estimated cost for the project is \$13,500, and is requesting to encumber up to 100%, not to exceed \$13,500. A motion was made to concur with the encumbrance Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ- DC- 16 for Albert Brothers LLP to install cover crops in Section 11 of Milton Township at 100% of the total cost of the project not to exceed \$13,500.

Motion: Dave Livingston  
Seconded: Glenn Hahn  
Rick Alberts abstained  
The motion carried

#### **District Cost-Share Contract 2024-01(Bernice Kubat Trust) Payment**

Bernie Kubat Trust of Claremont, MN has requested cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – grassed waterway project of in Section 11 of Hayfield Township. The cost for the

project was \$2,440.13, and is requesting 75% of that amount, not to exceed \$1,980.10. A motion was made to approve the payment for installation of District Cost-Share Contract 2024- 01 for Bernice Kubat Trust, a grassed waterway in Section 11 of Hayfield Township at 75% of the total cost of the project not to exceed \$1980.10.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Watershed Cost- Share Contract 2024WAGZ- DC- CRP- 01 (Lermon) Payment**

James Lermon of West Concord, MN has requested cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 634– Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, SAFE will be established on Section 17 of Milton Township. The final cost for the project was \$3.663, up to 100%, not to exceed \$500. A motion was made to approved the payment on Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ- DC-CRP-01 for James Lermon for the restoration of rare or declining natural communities in Section 17 of Milton Township at 100% of the total cost of the project not to exceed \$500.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Other New Business**

#### **FY2025 Buffer Law Implementation Grant Agreement**

The Board of Soil and Water Resources has released the FY2025 Buffer Law Grant (P25-0588) agreement with the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a total of \$20,000. A motion was made to approve the FY2025 Buffer Law Grant agreement between BWSR and the Dodge SWCD totaling \$20,000.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC- 17 (Koop) Encumbrance**

Craig Koop of Pine Island, MN has requested cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340 – cover crop project of in Section 1 of Milton Township. The estimated cost for the project is \$14,527.50, and is requesting to encumber up to 100%, not to exceed \$14,527.50. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ- DC- 17 for Craig Koop to install cover crops in Section 1 of Milton Township at 100% of the total cost of the project not to exceed \$14,527.50.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried

#### **Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC- 13 (Gibbs) Payment**

David Gibbs of Mantorville, MN has requested cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – grassed waterway installed in Section 18 of Mantorville Township. The final cost for the project was \$10,090.00, and is requesting 90% of that amount, not to exceed \$9,381.00. A motion was made to approve the payment on Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ- DC- 13 for David Gibbs, installing a grassed waterway in Section 18 of Mantorville Township at 90% of the total cost of the project not to exceed \$9,381.00.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-06 (Mark Finstuen) Amendment**

Mark Finstuen has requested an amendment to the Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-06. The original estimated cost of the practice was \$32,244.25 and was approved to encumber up to 90%, not to exceed the amount of \$29,019.82. Since the original estimate, additional items have been added and quantities had to be updated. Finstuen is requesting an additional \$3,848.68 to cover overages and 3 acres of pre-construction cover. The adjusted total amount to encumber to cover 90% of the total project cost and the additional acres of pre-construction cover will be \$32,968.50. A motion was made to approve the amendment to 2024WAGZ- DC -06 for Mark Finstuen to be encumbered and authorizing Adam King, District Manager, to sign off on the final documents when they are ready.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-07 (Derek Finstuen) Amendment**

Derek Finstuen has requested an amendment to the Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-07. The original estimated cost of the practice was \$13,223.16 and was approved to encumber up to 90%, not to exceed the amount of \$11,900.84. During the design process, quantities were increased and practices were changed from the preliminary design. The final total cost is \$50,279.13. Finstuen is requesting an additional \$33,950.38 to cover design changes, overages, and 4 acres of pre-construction cover. The adjusted total amount to encumber to cover 90% of the total project cost and the additional acres of pre-construction cover will be \$33,950.38. A motion was made to approve the amendment to 2024WAGZ- DC -07 for Derek Finstuen to be encumbered and authorizing Adam King, District Manager, to sign off on the final documents when they are ready.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

There was no Other New Business.

**Correspondence & Staff Report**

The Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District received an invite to the MASWCD Annual Convention for 2024 will be held December 2-4, 2024. It will be at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Bloomington, MN. When the district receives more details, it will be brought to the board. Adam King, District Manager, reported working with Allison on completing tax correction forms, monthly financials, and a Buffer Law mailout. King reported Jessica Klingfus has been in the field doing design work and Zac Colton has ben working on the cover crop program and finding the right seed mix.

**Supervisor Reports**

**Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor**

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported attending the Root River Watershed Policy Advisory Committee Meeting. The watershed budget is getting to the end of the remaining funds of one grant and will be requesting the last of the available funds. Hahn attended a tractor ride in Preston. The office in Preston is experiencing being sort-staffed and having a hard time finding employees.

**David Livingston, District IV Supervisor**

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported attending the Cedar River Watershed District public hearing where a levy/budget was approved. Livingston stated in the past the public has shown disagreement towards levies but the community did not go against the approved plan this time. The Dexter project will be moving

forward as the landowners finally came to an agreement but now being held up due to permits needed. The permitting process is slower than normal. Livingston stated the CRP program is busy. The higher rates for RIM are enticing landowners more than ever before. Livingston is looking forward to the next Cedar River Watershed District Meeting.

**Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor**

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported attending the Zumbro River Watershed Policy Advisory Committee Meeting and Oxbow Tour. During the meeting, finances were discussed and are looking good for the watershed, learned about a Milkhouse Waterway Project that was installed, and went on a tour of Oxbow. Scherger described how the water that runs off from the milk house during the cleaning process is irrigated into the fields so it doesn't freeze and drains back into a holding tank. Scherger expressed that the need for well sealing in the Oronoco area has increased since the city converted the water from wells. One well sealing has already been completed. The Zumbro River Watershed is using Townsquare media for some advertisement and Scherger is interested on seeing the marketing results.

**Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor**

Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor, did not attend meeting and did not provide a report.

**Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor**

Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor, did not provide a report.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be held Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 7:15 p.m. in the conference room of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center, 916 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SE, Dodge Center, MN.


**Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Larry Scherger, Chair, called for a motion for adjournment at 10:34 PM.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	10-15-24	Allison English

