



Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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Dodge Center, Minnesota 55927

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Minutes of the January 28, 2025

Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

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

Members Present: Larry Scherger, Chair
Rick Alberts, Vice-Chair
Glenn Hahn, Treasurer
David Livingston, Secretary
Bruce Freerksen, PR&I

Members Absent: None

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; Ann Gunness, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Oath of Office: Re-elected Supervisors Rick Alberts – District I, Bruce Freerksen – District II, and Glenn Hahn – District V, took the Oath of Office given by Larry Scherger, Chair.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: There were no additions to the January 28, 2025 board meeting agenda. A motion was made to approve the January 28, 2025 meeting agenda as presented.
Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the December 17, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes: The supervisors discussed the December 17, 2024 board meeting minutes. Corrections included changing the spelling of “Treasure” to “Treasurer” on page 2 under the Treasurer’s Report. A motion was made to approve the December 17, 2024 Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District’s Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes as corrected.
Motion: Glenn Hahn
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen
The motion carried unanimously.

Partner Agency Reports

Natural Resource Conservation Service Report

Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, reported that Gary Kurer, Team Lead, United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, has retired, and that Bird is temporarily filling in. Currently there is a federal hiring freeze, and Bird is unsure when the Team Lead position will be replaced, along with the other current vacancies within the counties on the team. Bird also reported that there is a funding freeze on all federal funds, but USDA programs may have been exempt. There were 32 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) applications approved, with about \$600,000 allocated. Projects included grassed waterways, composting facilities, no-till / strip-till, but the funding for these projects is uncertain.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Report

Ann Gunness, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, introduced herself and reported that she is the new Board Conservationist for the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, and that she was previously working for the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources southern region is now fully staffed. Gunness will be covering Dodge, Freeborn, Steele, Mower and Olmsted counties. There is a Soil Health Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) meeting coming up on February 11, 2025 at the Olmsted SWCD office. Gunness just had a Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) kickoff meeting with Dodge County, and that the mid-plan assessment for the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed is starting.

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 December 2024 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$266,780.87 for December and \$746,654.98 for 2024, expenditures of \$46,280.20 for December and \$507,086.25 for 2024, the general ledger and aging summary, with a payables total of \$11,733.33. Adam King, District Manager, explained that quarter 3 and quarter 4 watershed invoices have been processed and sent, are included in the report, and is one of the reasons the revenues are higher than usual this month. King also explained that the second payment for FY2025 SWCD Aid has been received, and also contributed to the higher revenues. King noted the total net income of the district at \$239,568.73 for 2024, and explained that this is usually the time when funds are designated for a 6-month salary reserve, compensated absences, district cost-share, and/or the vehicle/building/equipment fund. The supervisor's discussed the treasurer's report and weather to designate funds. A motion was made to designate an additional \$10,000 to the Vehicle/Building/Equipment fund, an additional \$30,000 to the Cost-Share fund, and an additional \$10,000 to the 6-month Salary Reserve fund.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made to approve the December 2024 Treasurer's Report, pay bills on the aging summary, for a payables total of \$11,733.33, and to pay the supervisors vouchers.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Employee Re-filing Fees

Adam King, District Manager, reported that he has not heard back from his CPA on how much the re-filing fees would cost. King advised the supervisors he would present the information as soon as he has the numbers. King also reported that another error has been found with taking the amounts employees contribute to their health insurance premiums after taxes, when they should have been taken out before taxes. Allison English, Administrative Professional, is working on filling out 941-X forms to correct the previously submitted paperwork. Once the amounts are totaled, the district will reimburse the affected employees, and the district will be reimbursed by the IRS. This item has been tabled.

Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business.

New Business

Election of Officers

Current officers for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors include Chair: Larry Scherger; Vice-Chair: Rick Alberts; Treasurer: Glenn Hahn; Secretary: David Livingston; and Public Relations: Bruce Freerksen. A nomination was made by David Livingston and Seconded by Glenn Hahn to cast a unanimous ballot for Larry Scherger for Chair, Rick Alberts for Vice – Chair, Glenn Hahn for Treasurer, David Livingston for Secretary, and Bruce Freerksen for Public Relations. Larry Scherger accepted the nomination for Chair, Rick Alberts accepted the nomination for Vice – Chair, David Livingston accepted the nomination for Secretary, and Bruce Freerksen accepted the nomination for Public Relations.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Set 2025 Regular Board Meeting Dates and Times

The supervisors discussed dates and times for the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Regular Board of Supervisors meetings. A motion was made to hold the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Regular Board of Supervisor meetings on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 P.M. at the United States Department of Agriculture Service Center at 916 2nd St. S.E. Dodge Center, Minnesota 55927.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

Designate 2024 Financial Institutions

Currently Manufacturers Bank and Trust (MBT) and Heritage Bank are the designated financial institutions. A motion was made to designate Manufacturers Bank and Trust (MBT), and Heritage Bank as the financial institutions of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for 2025.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Set 2025 Supervisor Committee Assignments

The supervisors discussed 2025 committee assignments. A motion was made to assign Supervisors to the following committees:

Personnel Committee: Larry Scherger; Rick Alberts

Finance Committee: Glenn Hahn; Bruce Freerksen

Dodge County Feedlot Advisory Committee: Glenn Hahn

Cedar - Wapsipinicon Watershed Plan: David Livingston (Glenn Hahn Alt.)

Root River Watershed Plan: Glenn Hahn (David Livingston Alt.)

Greater Zumbro Watershed Plan: Larry Scherger (Rick Alberts Alt.)

Cedar River Watershed District: David Livingston (Glenn Hahn Alt.)

Southeast SWCD Technical Support Joint Powers Board: Larry Scherger (Rick Alberts Alt.)

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Set 2025 Supervisor Per Diem and Mileage Rates

Supervisor Per Diem rates were set at \$125.00, and mileage rates were set at the IRS rate of \$0.67/mile in 2024. The IRS Mileage rate for 2025 has increased to \$0.70/mile. A motion was made to set 2025 Supervisors Per Diem rates at \$125.00, and set the mileage rate at the 2025 IRS rate of \$0.70/mile.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Consent to 2025 Monthly Invoice Payments

Regular monthly invoices for 2025 include the amount for the approved health insurance plan (currently \$2,801.02/month) to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, the amount for the approved life, short term disability, and dental insurance plan (currently \$373.59/month) to Humana, Payroll Processing Fee to Intuit QuickBooks (currently \$30.07/month), HSA/Dependent Care Account fee to Medsurety LLC, for \$50.00/month, \$109.99/month to KMTelecom for internet, \$35.01/month to Verizon Wireless for survey equipment hotspot, \$66.20/month to Techright Services, Inc for antivirus and server monitoring, \$857.16 to Ron Carlsen for rent, and \$100.00 to AA Storage for a storage unit. A motion was made to approve the payment of the approved health insurance plan, currently \$2,801.02/month, to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, the amount of the approved life/short term disability/dental plan, currently \$373.59/month to Humana, \$30.07/month to Intuit QuickBooks, \$50.00/month to Medsurety LLC, \$109.99/month to KMTelecom, \$35.01/month to Verizon Wireless, \$66.20/month to Techright Services, Inc, \$857.16 to Ron Carlsen, and \$100.00 to AA Storage totaling \$4,423.04/month.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) 2025 Renewal Contributions

Adam King, District Manager, presented the invoice for 2025 renewal contributions in the amount of \$7,426.00 from the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT). A motion was made to authorize payment of \$7,426.00 to Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) for 2025 renewal contributions.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

2025 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Dues

Adam King, District Manager, presented a cover letter, 2024 accomplishments, and the 2025 invoice for \$7,431.37 from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The supervisors discussed the 2025 MASWCD Dues. A motion was made to authorize payment of \$7,431.37 to the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts for 2025 dues.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Employee Training Request – Zac Colton

Zac Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician, is requesting to attend the Soil Management Summit to be held on Wednesday, January 29th and Thursday, January 30th 2025 at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in Mankato, MN. Registration is \$125 for the event and lodging may be needed. A motion was made to approved sending Zac Colton to the Premier Soil Management Summit on January 29th and 30th 2025, pay \$125 for registration and cover lodging if needed.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Survey Equipment Purchase

Adam King, District Manager, discussed and presented the quote for new survey equipment, including a new Trimble TSC7 controller, and a new Trimble R12i receiver from Frontier Precision. The quoted price of the bundle is \$39,775.62 with trade-in of our current Trimble survey equipment, an R8s receiver and a TSC2 tablet controller. A motion was made to approve the purchase of the Trimble TSC7 and R12i bundle with accessories for the price of \$39,775.62 including trade-in.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously

2025 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Day at the Capitol

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will hold their annual Day at the Capitol with a legislative briefing on Tuesday, March 04, 2025 and meetings with our legislators on Wednesday, March 05, 2025. There will also be a Legislative Priorities Informative Webinar on February 04, 2025. Registration for the event is \$130.00. A motion was made to approve sending any staff or supervisors that wishes to attend the 2025 Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Day at the Capitol with \$130.00 for registration and lodging.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

2023 Financial Audit Quotes

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that we have received a quote of \$5,600 for the 2024 financial audit from Peterson Company. King also requested a quote from Katie Jacobson, CPA from Slayton MN. Katie Jacobson, CPA completed and presented the 2023 financial audit for the Southeast Area SWCD Technical Support Joint Powers Board, and Goodhue SWCD. Katie Jacobson, CPA quoted \$5,500 to complete the 2024 financial audit. The supervisors discussed the quotes from Peterson Company and Katie Jacobson, CPA for the audit of the 2024 financials. A motion was made to accept the quote of \$5,600 from Peterson Company and sign the quote letter for the 2024 Dodge SWCD financial audit.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-09 (Balzum Revocable Living Trust) Payment

The Muriel Ann Balzum Revocable Living Trust of Dodge Center, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 412 – grassed waterway installed in Section 12 of Wasioja Township. The trust was authorized to encumber \$7,612.96. The trust did not move forward with an optional part of the project, and the final cost of the project was \$26,540.00. \$23,762 was provided in federal funding, and the trust is requesting 90% cost-share between federal and state sources including two acres of preconstruction cover totaling \$300.00, not to exceed \$424.00 from WAGZ Watershed Based Implementation Funding. A motion was made to approve the payment for Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-09 for the Muriel Ann Balzum Revocable Living Trust for installing a grassed waterway

and two acres of preconstruction cover in Section 12 of Wasioja Township for \$424.00 from WAGZ Watershed Based Implementation Funds.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Other New Business

There was no Other New Business

Correspondence & Staff Report

Adam King, District Manager presented the bound final copies of the 2023 financial audit from Peterson Company, along with the accompanying cover letter. King also discussed the Southeast Regional Groundwater Protection and Soil Health Initiative, presenting the accompanying fact sheet and draft bill to the legislature. The initiative is asking for \$9,000,000 in FY26 and \$9,000,000 in FY27 for implementing a program similar to what Olmsted SWCD has been implementing, including providing an incentive to farmers and producers for establishing a cover crop that is grown to a height of at least 12 inches, and additional ad-on incentives for items such as growing the cover crop to at least 24 inches. The supervisors discussed the program and the draft bill.

Supervisor Reports

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported attending the Cedar River Watershed District Board meeting on Wednesday, December 18, 2024 where the managers reviewed and approved their agreement with the Mower Soil and Water Conservation District, and approved their final budget. The managers also discussed the Southeast Minnesota Nitrogen Legislative Ag and Natural Resources tour. Livingston reported that the projects had been wrapped up, and staff were working on the Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) and Conservation Reserve and Enhancement Programs (CREP). Livingston also reported attending the Cedar River Watershed District Board meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2025 where the Dobbins Creek Habitat and Section 319 monitoring grants were discussed. The Orchard Creek access site has been completed, and Tim Ruzek has been working on outreach and the 2024 Annual Report for the Cedar River Watershed District. Livingston said their 2025 tree order form has been released, and that there will be a joint Mower SWCD and Cedar River Watershed District meeting on February 19, but the meeting could be moved to February 12, 2025. Livingston also reported attending the most recent Dodge County Park Board meeting, where there was a motion to disband the Dodge County Park Board, as Dodge County Environmental Services have been handling Dodge County Park issues. The Dodge County Commissioners wants the Dodge County Park Board to continue to provide input on Dodge County parks as the Dodge County Park Committee. The prairie in the county park next to the landfill didn't have much seed in the middle, so the county is going to inter-seed the prairie, and mow walking trails through the prairie. Work continues at the Seminary Ruins, with updating and stabilizing the walls.

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported that there was no County Feedlot Committee Meeting, but did report that the Root River Watershed Policy Advisory Committee will be meeting on Monday, February 24, 2025.

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported attending the Southeast Soil and Water Conservation District Technical Support Joint Powers Board (JPB) meeting on Wednesday, January 22, 2025 where new officers were elected, projects that JPB staff have been working on were reviewed, and Katie Jacobson, CPA, presented the financial audit for the year ending June, 30, 2024. The JPB is reposting for an engineering technician position, and there were some feedlot funds remaining

for one project encumbered in Goodhue County, and one in Wabasha County. There is also \$25 Million coming through a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant for installing soil health practices.

Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor

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

Rick Albers, District I Supervisor

Rick Albers, 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, February 18, 2025 at 6:30 P.M. in the conference room of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center, 916 2nd Street SE, Dodge Center, MN.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Larry Scherger, Chair, called for a motion for adjournment at 10:07 P.M.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
<i>Larry Scherger</i>	2-18-25	Adam King

