



# Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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## Minutes of the August 20, 2024

### Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

#### Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

*The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 7:16 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; Beth Hanggi, Fahning and Associates; Nancy Peterson, Dodge County Resident

**Approval of Meeting Agenda:** Adam King, District Manager, presented an updated agenda to the supervisors. Additions included Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-02 (DLB Farms LLC) Encumbrance, Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-04 (Golden Kernel) Encumbrance, Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-06 (Olsson) Encumbrance, Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-07 (Olsson) Encumbrance, Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC- (Montgomery) Encumbrance, FY25 Soil Health Delivery Grant Agreement, FY25 Soil and Water Conservation District Aid Workplan, under New Business. A motion was made to approve the August 20, 2024 meeting agenda, as updated.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the July 16, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes:** The supervisors discussed the July 16, 2024 board meeting minutes. Corrections to the board meeting minutes include changing “though” to “through” in the first and third paragraphs and changing “Fahaning” to “Fahning” under Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Insurance Coverage on page 2, and changing “Robert Wolf” to “Bruce Wolf” and “Westfield Township” to “Ripley Township” under District Cost-Share Contract 2024-05 (Wolf) Encumbrance on page 4. A motion was made to approve the July 16, 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.

August 20, 2024 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

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

Chair Scherger moved up the Short-Term Disability and Life Insurance Coverage agenda item from Unfinished Business.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Short-Term Disability and Life Insurance Coverage**

Beth Hanggi, Fahning and Associates, shared our current short-term disability and life insurance through USABLE is set at \$25,000, and USABLE will not provide higher limits to the district. Hanggi has received quotes from Humana on \$50,000 coverage on life insurance, short-term disability, and dental, and are comparable to USABLE.

Adam King, District Manager, shared that the district currently uses HelloFurther for Health Savings Accounts, with a \$4.00/employee/month fee, and an annual renewal fee of \$150.00/year. King informed the supervisors that HelloFurther has been purchased by HealthEquity, and the fees have increased to \$75/month/employee and an annual renewal fee of \$1,150/year. Hanggi has asked for additional quotes and found that Medsurety provides Health Savings Accounts at \$25/month and an annual renewal fee of \$250. Staff expressed interest in dependent care options, and adding dependent care will add an additional \$25/month.

The supervisors discussed short-term disability and life insurance coverages, and increasing the amount of life insurance. A motion was made to increase the amount of life insurance from \$25,000 to \$30,000, and go through Humana for the coverage.

Motion: Rick Alberts

The supervisors continued to discuss the amount of life insurance. Alberts amended his motion to \$35,000 in life insurance coverage from Humana.

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

The supervisors discussed Health Savings Accounts and dependent care options. A motion was made to use Medsurety for Health Savings Accounts and start dependent care.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Rick Alberts

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 that there is an in-field demonstration of cover crop installation including demonstrations of drones, drills, and vertical till machines on September 04, 2024 in Blooming Prairie. Bird reported that they are still working on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and informed the supervisors that there are limited acres available for enrollment, with a sign-up deadline of August 30, 2024. Construction is starting to wrap up with a seeding deadline of September 10, 2024. There have been a lot of projects coming in. It appears that the NRCS has hired a new Soil Conservationist in the Dodge Center Service Center that will be starting in late September. Bird presented information on a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) grant involving ethanol and energy and expanding soil health through carbon markets.

### **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, Treasurer, presented the June and July 2024 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheets covering account balances noting the increased amount under Accounts Receivable – Due from Other Governments, updated June revenues of \$83,655.63 noting the invoices for the Cedar-Wapsipinicon Watershed (CWW), and Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ), July revenues of \$89,556.05, June expenditures of \$34,344.16, July Expenditures of \$51,707.54, the general ledgers, and the July aging summary with a payables total of \$6,965.19. Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the Certificate of Deposit (CD) will mature in September. The supervisors told King to wait until the CD matures to make any changes. The supervisors discussed the treasurer's report. A motion was made to approve the treasurer's report, and pay the bills on the aging summary for a payables total of \$6,965.19.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

## **New Business**

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

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that staff and landowners in the county have expressed an interest in making a straw crimper available for rent from the district. The straw crimper would be used for crimping straw into newly constructed grassed waterways. Other districts have a straw crimper available to rent for those that want to seed and mulch their own projects. The supervisors discussed the straw crimper and the potential for a rental program. The supervisors instructed King to reach out to those districts and learn more about their rental programs.

### **Soil Health Scholarships for the Soil Management Summit**

Adam King, District Manager, presented a request from the Minnesota Office of Soil Health (MOSH) asking for interest on providing soil health scholarships for the Soil Management Summit. King reminded the supervisors that the district has provided scholarships in the past. The registration fee for the Soil Management Summit in Mankato is \$125.00. The supervisors discussed the Soil Management Summit, and covering the registration fee for Dodge County residents. A motion was made to cover 100% of the registration fee for the first twelve Dodge County residents that register for the Soil Management Summit to be held in Mankato, Minnesota on January 29-30, 2025.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024-WAGZ-DC-15 (Ripley) Encumbrance**

Ripley Township is requesting cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for the installation of a 351 – Well Decommissioning project to be installed in Section 21 of Ripley Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$4,875.00, and is requesting to encumber 75% using WAGZ Watershed Based Implementation Funding, not to exceed \$3,000.00. A motion was made to approve the encumbrance of watershed cost-share contract 2024-WAGZ-DC-15 for Ripley Township to install a 351 – Well Decommissioning project at 75% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$3,000.00 from WAGZ Watershed Based Implementation Funding.

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

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

James Lermon of West Concord, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 17 of Milton Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-01 for James Lermon to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 17 of Milton Township for an incentive of \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract.

Motion: Rick Alberts  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-CRP-DC-CRP-03 (RJMPI LLC) Encumbrance**

RJMPI LLC of Chanhassen, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 327 – Conservation Cover, Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes, project in Section 13 of Milton Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$250.00 for a re-enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-03 for RJMPI LLC to install a Conservation Cover, Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes project in Section 13 of Milton Township for an incentive of \$250.00 for a re-enrollment contract.

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

**Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-07 (Toquam) Payment**

Roger Toquam of Blooming Prairie, MN is requesting payment for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed for a 327 – Conservation Cover, Prairie Strips, project in Section 30 of Westfield Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$80/acre/year with a 10-year contract. The CRP contract started June 01, 2024, and Toquam has enrolled 1.01 acres into the program, for a total incentive payment of \$808.00. A motion was made to approve an incentive payment of \$80/acre/year covering 10 years and 1.01 acres totaling \$808.00 for Cedar – Wapsipinicon Watershed Cost-Share Contract CWW-CRP-DC-07 for Roger Toquam to install a 327 – Conservation Cover, Prairie Strips in Section 30 of Westfield Township.

Motion: David Livingston  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-CRP-DC-CRP-02 (DLB Farms LLC) Encumbrance**

DLB Farms LLC of Claremont, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 06 of Ashland Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$250.00 for a re-enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-02 for DLB Farms LLC to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 06 of Ashland Township for an incentive of \$250.00 for a re-enrollment contract.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Glenn Hahn  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-CRP-DC-CRP-04 (Golden Kernel) Encumbrance**

Golden Kernel Farms Inc. of Mankato, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 32 of Mantorville Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-04 for Golden Kernel Farms Inc. to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 32 of Mantorville Township for an incentive of \$500.00 for a re-enrollment contract.

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-CRP-DC-CRP-05 (Golden Kernel) Encumbrance**

Golden Kernel Farms Inc. of Mankato, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 32 of Mantorville Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-05 for Golden Kernel Farms Inc. to install a Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) in Section 32 of Mantorville Township for an incentive of \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract.

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

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-CRP-DC-CRP-06 (Olsson) Encumbrance**

Jackie Olsson of Kasson, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 657 – Wetland Restoration on Floodplains, project in Section 17 of Milton Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-06 for Jackie Olsson to install a 657 – Wetland Restoration on Floodplains in Section 17 of Milton Township for an incentive of \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract.

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-CRP-DC-CRP-07 (Olsson) Encumbrance**

Jackie Olsson of Kasson, MN is requesting to encumber funds for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) incentive through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) for a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), project in Section 17 of Milton Township. The incentive payment for this practice is \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-CRP-06 for Jackie Olsson to install a 643 – Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), in Section 17 of Milton Township for an incentive of \$500.00 for a new enrollment contract.

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

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-14 (Montgomery) Encumbrance**

Bradley Montgomery of West Concord, MN has requested cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for the project of 412 – Grassed Waterway to be installed in Section 09 of Concord Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$2,689.50, and he is requesting to encumber 75%, not to exceed \$2,017.13. There will be 1 acre of conservation cover at \$150.00/acre included for a total encumbrance of \$2,167.13. A motion was made to approve and encumber Watershed Cost-Share contract 2024WAGZ-DC-14 for Bradley Montgomery to install a 412 – Grassed Waterway in Section 09 of Concord Township at 75% of the total cost of the project, plus 1 acres of preconstruction cover at \$150/acre not to exceed \$2,167.13.

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
The motion carried unanimously.

**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources FY25 Soil Health Delivery Grant Agreement**

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources has awarded the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District a FY25 BWSR Soil Health Delivery Grant in the amount of \$60,000.00, and the grant agreement is now available for approval. King explained that a workplan focused on soil health will be needed for the grant. A motion was made to approve, sign and submit the grant agreement for the FY25 BWSR Soil Health Delivery Grant totaling \$60,000.00.

Motion: David Livingston  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
The motion carried unanimously.

**FY25 SWCD AID Workplan**

Adam King, District Manager, reminded the supervisors that going forward, SWCD AID received by the district from the MN Department of Revenue, and even though a formal workplan and annual expense reporting are no longer required, we wanted to provide an opportunity for input on a flexible workplan for the FY25 SWCD Aid dollars. King presented the following FY2025 SWCD AID workplan to the supervisors:

\$70,000.00	Administrative Professional Position
\$40,000.00	Survey Equipment Purchase
\$30,000.00	Technical Assistance
\$10,000.00	Education and Outreach (staff and materials)
\$5,000.00	Financial Assistance / Cost-share
\$3,897.00	Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans - staffing
<b>\$158,897.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

A motion was made to approve the workplan as outlined above, for the FY2025 SWCD AID total of \$158,897.00.

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

**Other New Business**

There was no Other New Business

**Correspondence & Staff Report**

Adam King, District Manager, presented a memo from the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation District (MASWCD) on removing term limits for officers on their board, a memo from the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) on the 2024 dividend, the National Conservation Foundation (NCF) 2023 Annual Report, and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) 2023 Annual Report. King also presented the commercial that was put together through the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro and Cedar-Wapsipinicon Watersheds. King discussed with the supervisors that one of the newly hired staff has become ill, and doesn't have sick leave built up. The supervisors discussed the Earned Sick and Safe Leave policy. A motion was made to change the Earned Sick and Safe Leave policy in the Policy Handbook to allow newly hired staff (newer than 6-months) to be advanced Earned Sick and Safe Leave, up to 40 hours (5 days / 1 weeks), earning back the Earned Sick and Safe Leave later, and taking the leave out of the employees last paycheck if the employee leaves before the advanced Earned Sick and Safe Leave is made up.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

King reported going through employee orientation with Allison English, Administrative Professional, and working on the 2023 Audit with English and the Peterson Company. Jessica Klingfus, Conservation Technician, has been in the field surveying and getting conservation projects installed, and Zac Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician, has been working with landowners on soil health practices, the no-till drill program and the Dodge County Cover Crop Program, and going surveying with staff from the office.

### **Supervisor Reports**

#### **Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor**

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, did not provide a report.

#### **Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor**

Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor, reported going to a Farmers Union meeting with Governor Walz near Pine Island.

#### **David Livingston, District IV Supervisor**

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported that attending Cedar River Watershed District (CRWD) board meeting held on July 17, 2024, where an update on the Dexter Project was provided, with the project going to the Technical Advisory Committee. Tim Ruzek has been assisting the Austin Foundation and Pheasants Forever on a state-owned hunting land project. Livingston also reported attending a Cedar – Wapsipinicon Conservation Tour on Wednesday, August 07, 2024, where they toured a flood project that still had flood debris on the overflow cage, a basin project that was installed a couple of years ago, and a project that hasn't started yet with a gully that has formed and continued to grow with every storm. The Cedar – Wapsipinicon Policy Advisory Committee Meeting was held afterwards where ~~there~~ they discussed the financial reports, approved changes to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Cost-Share Policy, viewed outreach videos and approved partnering with the Watershed Alliance for the Greater Zumbro (WAGZ) on a commercial to appear on KTTC on Friday nights during the sports report.

#### **Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor**

Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor, reported hearing about a buffer violation on easement land in Milton Township.

#### **Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor**

Larry Scherger, District III 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, September 17, 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 to adjourn at 11:19 P.M.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	9-17-24	Adam King