

**Wabasha Soil and Water Conservation
District Regular Board Meeting
May 22, 2025
8:15 am
611 Broadway Ave. Suite 10B**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:15 am by Lynn Zabel, Chair

Supervisors Present: Lynn Zabel, Chair, Chet Ross, Co-Chair, Sharleen Klennert, Treasurer, Dag Knudsen, Member

Staff Present: Terri Peters, District Manager

Others Present: Dave Copeland, BWSR and Frank Klennert, Citizen,

Shawn Huth 8:30 – 9:30am for DDA – Mark Goldberg presentation and discussion.

II. PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

III. AGENDA

Addition of Invoice from Lake City Septic for \$161.06, add to bills paid \$76,087.40.

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve The Agenda with the change to monthly bills paid to \$76,087.40.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments are limited to 5 minutes per speaker.

V. CONSENT AGENDA -Board Action

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Board and may be enacted through one motion. Any item on the Consent Agenda may be removed by any of the Board members for separate consideration.

i. Contracts

- A. Gary Stoning Contract# 25-CC-9 in the amount of \$1,320.00 for Practice# 327 Conservation Cover. Installed by date 7/30/2025.
(Funding source – FY25 Conservation Contracts)

ii. Contract Amendments

iii. Vouchers

- A. Reiter Living Trust Voucher in the amount of \$198.54 for Contract# 24-CC-15. Practices 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation, Practice 490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation.
(Funding source – FY24 Conservation Contracts)
- B. Dennis Anderson Voucher in the amount of \$711.00 for Contract# 24-CC-6. Practice 314 Brush Management.
(Funding source – FY24 Conservation Contracts)

- C. Allelu Farms LLC Voucher in the amount of \$331.20 for Contract# 24-CC-16. Practice 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation
(Funding source – FY24 Conservation Contracts)
- D. Lawrence H & Eileen M Living Trust Voucher in the amount of \$456.00 for Contract# 25-CC-5. Practice 612 Tree/Shrub Establishment.
(Funding source – FY25 Conservation Contracts)
- E. Jerry Bright Voucher in the amount of \$12,754.26 for Contract# 2025WAGZ-WC-01. Practice 412 Grassed Waterway.
(Funding source – FY24-FY25 Greater Zumbro Watershed Based Funding)

iv. Grants

v. AgBMB Loan Applications

- A. Matthew Berktoed AgBMP Loan Application in the amount of \$29,000.00 for new Skid Loader. This will help with timely and proper manure handling for the dairy operation.

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Consent Agenda.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

8:30 am – Mark Goldberg, Principal Consultant, DDA Human Resources, Inc.

David Drown Associates Company

- A. Report of Comp Study. Mark will be attending remotely.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88355556701?pwd=Gd97Xf5To2v8vGi8lY2W55YlZUpXDA.1>

Meeting ID: 883 5555 6701

Passcode: 274707

Mark Goldberg gave a presentation on the wage cost study he worked on with Terri and Shawn. (Presentation included in Board packet) Matched job descriptions to the market. Need to align with the market. Job evaluation tool, 6 grades and 12 steps. 10-15% between grades and steps are 4-4.5% apart from each other. (JET) focuses on the job, not the person. Make internally equitable. Competitively comparable to other SWCD's. Nobody above maximum and 1 under. Bring all up to the next step. Start 7/1/2025.

- B. Terri and Shawn Huth, discussion on the DDA recommendations.**
Discussion: Talked about DDA recommendations with the board.
Job descriptions assigned point system to come up with grades.
Promotional ladder. Job experience, certifications, could go up to the next step. Two certifications, down a grade and up a step.
New wage rates will start 7/1/2025.
\$6k impact from 7/1 – 12/31/2025.
Job evaluations at the end of the year, performance criteria.
Jan. 1 COLA + step increase.
Post opening for Jenna's position in June.

Motioned by Klennert seconded by Ross to accept the recommendations from David Drown Associates Company accepting the wage scale & placement for staff starting 7/1/2025.

Discussion: Retention.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VI. SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. April 24, 2025, Meeting Minutes – Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve the Secretary's Report.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT – Board Action

A. April District Financial Statements

Included for your review.

B. April Program Record

Terri went through the financial statements. One change for Soil Health Delivery on the Program Record.

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve the Treasurer's Report as written and to the best of our ability.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

VIII. PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS

A. Monthly Bills in the amount of \$76,087.40 - Board Action

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve Payment of the Monthly Bills in the amount of \$76,087.40.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

IX. DISTRICT REPORTS

A. Chair Report – Lynn Zabel

B. County Commissioner – Bob Walkes

Tuesday 5-20, Mark Goldberg of DDA did the same presentation for the County. It came out better than they thought. Commissioners supported.

First look at 2026 numbers. State/Federal coming down 12%.

The Board of Equalization is at the second meeting in June. Property values.

Current valuations for properties are not adjusted yet. They are gross numbers.

Terri commented that she received the County request for budget, due 6-9.

Bob commented that the funds are frozen, SWCD will stay where we are. Projects that are planned for 2025 will go ahead. 2026 projects will be scaled back. They are on the 10-year plan but are not approved yet.

C. District Manager Report – Terri Peters

Staff are busy with construction project season.

WinLaC & WAGZ Policy Committee meetings. Partners working on funding programs for WAGZ. Projects coming up will need to go through a ranking system. Contacted by MDA, asking if we would be a site for placement of an Ag Water Quality person. He will not be a certifier but would help landowners get through the process. He would be working regionally. Work on back log, doing site visits. Greg Klinger is the certifier. Bob mentioned he was waiting to meet with Greg so that he can get certified again. Will need to follow-up.

Sheila Harmes drafting a Well Sealing grant, Whitewater Watershed. We would be included. Dave added that JP Board will be meeting quarterly. SWCD's will hold the contracts and sub-agreements through the JP Board. Sheila is working on how to get timely contracts with the Whitewater JP Board for SWCD's to get reimbursed.

Program record

Presentation for the Lake City Garden Club

AgBMP – started new online application process. Lendor or Applicant can fill out form.

Tree Day

5th Grade Conservation Day. Hyde Park Dairy – Kevin Siewert hosted. Staff gave a tour of dairy parlor and explained how feed is made. The kids all got ice cream.

After lunch, there were three stations at Cold Spring Brook

Met with Ella's Ameri-Corp Supervisor, end of year planning.

Wetland areas. Talked to Kristen Dieterman and Supervisor for a second round work plan for West Indian Creek. Matt Krueger contracted to do outreach for West Indian Creek. List of landowners that are interested in drone seeding of cover crops.

Soil Health RCPP Grant. We were supposed to start implementing 7/1/25.

Dave said we will not see grant funding to implement with landowners until after 7/1/2025. Contracts with producers for fall seeding cover crops should be good to go, do the work now. Do technical assistance with other contract funds. We will not have the federal funds to put toward the contracts until later in July or early August.

D. NRCS Report – Christina Taylor – (In the packet)

E. District Technician Report- Matt Kempinger – (In the packet)

Dag had a question on Matt's report. Suggested to change language from "Construction inspections" to "Site inspections". Matt is not signing off; he does not have JAA. On site observing what work is being done. Taking notes on what he is observing with the contractors.

F. Natural Resources Technician Report– Katelyn Abts – (In the packet)

G. Soil Health/Nutrient Management Tech Report – Deanna Pomije – (In the Packet)

Sharleen had a question for Deanna. She listened to the MPCA on Feedlot Rules. Starting new adjusted rules. 5-7 years before they are completed. Comment period. Rules have changed, for all feedlots. June 26 – 2 public meetings, one in Chatfield and one in Zumbrota.

H. Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant Report -Sue Cerwinske –

I. BWSR Report – Dave Copeland

Soil Health RCPP Grant we talked about earlier. Check with Jared House to see where we are with Federal Funds. No update on legislative session. We don't know how it will impact BWSR through them to SWCD's.

Soil Health RCPP -Federal funds. Terri questions on how the confidentiality will work for writing and board signing checks. Dave will check with Jared. Working on batch & build projects. Buy seed and then pay drone operator? Dave answered that we would invoice the farmer. Contract with farmer to put in cover crops. The grantee will act as seed contractor. The farmer would give us their seed invoice, and we would pay. Then we would invoice to get repaid. Drone operator would be another invoice.

J. Other agencies –

X. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Conservation Project – Lynn (open to any Supervisor for ideas) 3

XI. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Minnesota Department of Health – Private Well Inventory Grant in the amount of \$120,836.00. Effective July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027.

This is a draft of the grant. Funds for SWCD's to do well inventory, to address EPA's petition on wells not reported. Grant will come as docu-sign to Terri.

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Terri to docu-sign the MDH-Private Well Inventory Grant when it comes in. Effective date 7/1/2025.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

B. Approve Steve Evers Contract# 23-CWF-WIC-07 in the amount of \$17,155.23 for Practice 410 Grade Stabilization Structure, includes multiple practices. Installed by date 11/30/2025.

(Funding source – FY23 West Indian Creek Watershed Restoration and Protection)

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Ross to approve Steve Evers Contract# 23-CWF-WIC-07 in the amount of \$17,155.23 for Practice 410 Grade Stabilization Structure, includes multiple practices.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

C. Approve 1864 Joseph Roemer Farm LLC Contract# 2025WAGZ-WC-05 in the amount of \$5,301.00 for Practice 410 Grade Stabilization Structure. Installed by date 11/30/2025.

(Funding source – FY24-FY25 Greater Zumbro Watershed Based Funding (WAGZ))

Motioned by Ross and seconded by Klennert to approve 1864 Joseph Roemer Farm LLC Contract# 2025WAGZ-WC-05 in the amount of \$5,301.00 for Practice 410 Grade Stabilization Structure.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

D. Upcoming Events

- i. Memorial Day, May 26, 2025 – Offices Closed
- ii. Juneteenth, June 19, 2025 – Offices Closed
- iii. Local Work Group – June 26, 2025, 10:00 am (with our Regular Board Meeting)

XII. Board Reports

- A. Whitewater JPB – Lynn
Meeting Tuesday, May 27th at the St. Charles Community Center.
- B. Zumbro 1W1P – Dag
WAGZ May 8 Policy Meeting Report in board packet.
- C. WinLaC 1W1P – Lynn
Interesting leaf project for La Crescent. Wondered about waterway grass. Cutting and bale it but if not cut for hay, cut 6-12" to slowdown water. Dave commented that the USDA has different designs for cutting & baling or not. Tests on leaf species. Leaf sweeping more often. Applied for a better leaf sweeper from the competitive Clean Water Grant – BWSR.
- D. SE SWCD Technical Support JPB – Dag
July meeting to set budget for the Technical Assistance group.
- E. County Board Meeting – Sharleen

Invoice from Katie Dudley for \$134.06 – Wildlife Presenter for the 5th grade field day.

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to approve payment of Katie Dudley invoice in the amount of \$134.06.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

XIII. Adjourn

Motioned by Klennert and seconded by Knudsen to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 am.

Affirmative: Ross, Klennert, Knudsen, Zabel

Opposed: None

Motion Carried

Respectively Submitted By:



Seth Tentis, Secretary