



Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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Dodge Center, Minnesota 55927

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Minutes of the September 16, 2025

Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 6:31 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: Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District; Allison English, Administrative Professional, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: Corrections of the September 16, 2025 board meeting agenda include adding 'District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-04 (Smith) Encumbrance'; District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-03 (Tvedt) Encumbrance'; 'RCPP Changes'; and 'FY25 Soil Health Grant Fund Policy Update' under 'New Business'. A motion was made to approve the September 16, 2025 meeting agenda, as revised.

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

Approval of July 15, 2025

Board Meeting Minutes: Corrections to the August 19, 2025 board meeting minutes include changing the word 'rather' to 'other' on the second page in the last sentence under 'Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP)'. A motion was made to approve the September 19, 2025 board meeting minutes, as corrected.

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

Partner Agency Reports

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

Natural Resource Conservation Service Report

Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, shared with the supervisors that CRP has been the focus for the staff. The staff are looking at last year's seedings and they have taken off well compared to past years results. 95% of the seedings look good for the first couple of months in the ground. The staff are wrapping up the approved CRP applications, the total approved applications is around 22. There is an estimate of 26 EQIP projects for 2026 that are looking to receive funding. The projects are a range of different types from forestry work to nutrient management plans. The Cedar River Watershed District and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) have joined up for a large waterway project, the cost for the project is around \$23,000. NRCS staff are helping in Albert Lea with their work load as well. Bird shared the Owatonna District Conservationist has been filled and a Pheasant's Forever farm biologist started in the Austin office.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Report

Ann Gunness, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, was unable to attend the meeting but did send an update to Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District. Klingfus shared for Gunness the manure manage grant will open in the fall and the funding focus will be on clean drinking water. The incoming conservation delivery grants will be coming in one allocation this year and will be one year at a time. The RCPP money is still open for more requests. The new buffer law implementation grant will open on October 9th and districts can request up to \$25,000.

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 August 2025 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$5,483.08, expenditures of \$31,033.19 the general ledger and aging summary, with a payables total of \$649.28. A motion was made to approve the August 2025 Treasurer's Report, and pay bills on the aging summary, for a payables total of \$649.28.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Outstanding Invoices

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Dodge County has an outstanding invoice for the use of the drill to put in a county park area. Klingfus suggested since this is a county project we should waive the inquired fee for the drill as a community project. A motion was made to waive the fee accrued for using the drill for the county park project.

Motion: Bruce Freeksen

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Reports

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, advised the City of Austin's proposed levy passed. Livingston shared he spoke with other staff at the Cedar River Watershed District regarding the price increase to quick books and they are seeing the same

increase as well. The Cedar River Watershed has funding available for rain gardens and buffers. Livingston shared different outreach ideas other districts have done in the past as he would like to see more outreach done in our district. Livingston shared a mammoth tooth was found at the Old Galloway Farm.

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, shared the Root River Tour went well. The tour was held at the Eagle Bluff Environmental Center and Hahn shared photos during the board meeting. Hahn shared the Root River had their PRAP. The PRAP showed noncompliant forms. The forms have been updated and the issue was resolved.

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, shared he went on an interesting bus tour. The first stop was the water basin project at Van Zuilen's farm. The second stop was grassed waterways in Olmsted County. The third stop was Tom Larsen's farm where he was putting in oats. The fourth stop was Peddle Creek Development in Olmsted. The last stop was to the Rossman Farm where they are converting farm land over to grazing land.

Bruce Freerksen, District II Supervisor

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

Rick Alberts, District I Supervisor

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

Unfinished Business

QuickBooks Price Increase

Allison English, Administrative Professional, did check into two different companies but did not receive a quote for another accounting/payroll software. The supervisors discussed what other SWCD's use as well as the Watershed Districts. All the SWCD's and Watershed Districts use QuickBooks for their accounting / payroll program. A motion was made to approve the price increase for QuickBooks and pay the yearly subscription.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Peterson's Draft Audit and Representation Letter

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, presented the Management Representation Letter to the Peterson Company for the 2024 Financial Audit. The supervisors discussed the letter. A motion was made to sign and submit the Management Representation Letter to the Peterson Company.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously

Policy Handbook Update

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, a recommendation to update the current telework policy. The current telework policy is as follows:

As a small (less than five (5) employees), public facing office, all work should be conducted from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District office. Teleworking, or working remotely from home or another location will not be used except in exceptional circumstances of hazardous weather

The proposed telework policy is as follows:

As a small (less than five (5) employees), public facing office, all work should be conducted from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District office. Teleworking, or working remotely from home or another location can be used as an alternative method of meeting the needs of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District and the employee. Teleworking may be approved on a case-by-case, short term basis, and should be infrequent and not regularly scheduled, with a maximum of 32 hours per pay period. Telework will be used to meet exceptional operational circumstances, including cases of public emergency, compliance with public health guidance for contagious diseases, hazardous weather, utility outages (electricity / water), before and after doctor appointments, in place of sick leave when sickness does not prevent the ability to work, or when in-person meeting locations are closer to the employee's residence. The District Manager must approve telework, and telework must not adversely affect customer service delivery, employee productivity, or progress of any assignments. While teleworking, the employee shall be reachable by telephone, email or Microsoft Teams and shall respond within one hour during scheduled working hours.

After some discussion, a motion was made to approved the proposed telework policy and add it to the handbook.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen
Seconded: David Livingston
Votes in favor: 4
Vote against: 1
The motion carries.

Employee Training Request

The 2025 Board of Water and Soil Resource Academy will be held on Tuesday, October 21 through Thursday, October 23, 2025 at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd, Minnesota. Registration is \$85 per day and lodging is \$106.30 per night. A motion was made to approve any staff that would like to attend the 2025 BWSR Academy at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd, MN and the acquired costs to be covered.

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

Employee Training Request

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, is requesting to attend the MACDE Minnesota Managers Meeting. The meeting will be held from September 24 to September 25, 2025 at the MnDOT St. Cloud Training Center. The cost for registration is \$20.00 and one night of lodging at the Holiday Inn and Suites – St. Cloud for \$110 plus tax would be needed. A motion was made to approved Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, to attend the MACDE Minnesota Managers Meeting wit a cost of \$20.00 registration and one night lodging at a cost of \$110 plus tax.

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

MASWCD Area 7 Meeting

The 2025 MASWCD Area 7 meeting will be held on October 2, 2025 in Grand Meadow, MN from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The cost of registration is \$20 per person. All staff and supervisors are welcome to attend. A motion was made to approve any staff or supervisors who would like to attend the MASWCD Area 7 meeting held on October 2, 2025 in Grand Meadow, MN at a cost of \$20 per person.

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

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

AA Rental Agreement

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, informed the supervisors a new AA Rental Agreement needs to be signed. Our storage unit was not easily accessible with the trailer. The new storage unit is on a corner and will be more accessible for the trailer and side by side. There is no change to the cost of the unit. A motion was made to sign the new AA Rental Agreement.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

2026 ESRI Renewal Quotation

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, informed the supervisors our ESRI is up for renewal for 2026. ESRI provides the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) with Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The Dodge SWCD has migrated the two ArcGIS Professional Plus User Annual Subscriptions. For the GIS support and upgrades, ESRI charges \$2,400.00 per year, per subscription. We need two licenses for the district for a total of \$4,880 for the year. A motion was made to approve the renewal of two ESRI licenses at a total cost of \$4,880.00.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

RCPP Soil Health Application Ranking

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, presented the first batch of RCPP Soil Health Application Ranking. There are two projects up for ranking. The first project ranked 30 points and the second project ranked 40 points. The supervisors discussed the ranking sheets, the ranking criteria, and other options for funding. Klingfus advised the supervisors there is enough funding to fund both projects if they would decide to approve both. A motion was made to fund both projects for the first batch of RCPP Soil Health Application Ranking.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Non-Structural Practice Approval Authority

With the increase in Non-Structural contracts and Well Decommissioning contracts, staff are requesting that the District Manager have approval authority to sign off on all Non-Structural contracts and well decommissioning contracts. Staff are proposing any contact approved between regularly scheduled Dodge SWCD Board Meetings will be brought to the following board meeting to update the Supervisors. The supervisors discuss the topic. A motion was made to allow the District Manager to have approval authority to sign off on all Non-structural and well decommissioning contracts.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

District Manager Signing Authority – Grant Agreements, Amendments, and RFI

Staff is requesting that the District Manager have signing authority to sign off on grant agreements, amendments, and request for interests (RFI) on behalf of the board. Any grant documents signed off in between regularly scheduled Dodge SWCD Board Meetings will be brought to the following board meeting to update the supervisors. A motion was made to allow the District Manager to have signing authority to sign grant agreements, amendments, and any request for interests on the behalf of the board.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

FY25 Soil Health Delivery Grant Policy Update

Staff is requesting the restrictive language used in the FY25 Soil Health Grant Policy be updated to allow for more applications to be eligible. The original wording stated if a landowner had any other contract for cost share/ incentives from state, federal, or other sources would not be eligible under this grant. The proposed change updates the wording to state all acreage not currently under a federal, state, or other source contract is eligible.

Proposed Update:

The Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District will put funds towards cost-share / incentives for implementing cover crops on acreage not currently receiving cost share/incentives from state, federal or other sources, or receiving cover crop seed and labor through the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District.

A motion was made to approve the proposed update to the FY25 Soil Health Delivery Grant Policy.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

RCPD Proposed Ranking Change

Staff is requesting a change to the RCPD Application Ranking Form.

Proposed Changes:

Add two additional questions -

6. Is the proposed following an early harvest crop such as silage, canning crops, or small grains? (10 pts)

7. How far away is the proposed practice from DNR public watercourse or ditch?

a) Within 500' (10 pts)

b) 501' – 1500' (5 pts)

Change in total available points = 60

The supervisors discussed the proposed change and would like to change it a little bit.

Supervisor Changes-

6. If proposed project area follows an early harvest crop such as silage, canning crops, or small grains.

a) Greater than 25% of proposed acres (15 pts)

b) Up to 25% of proposed acres (10 pts)

7. How far away is the proposed practice from DNR public watercourse or ditch?

a) Within 500' (15 pts)

b) 501'-1500' (10 pts)

Total Available points = 90

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-04 (Smith) Encumbrance

Bill Smith of West Concord, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crop, installed in Section 23 of Concord Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$2,732.00 and they are requesting 100% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$2,732.00. Currently there is \$59,100.00 left to encumber, and there will be \$56,368.00, remaining to encumber once approved. A motion was made to encumber the cost-share contract 2025-SHD-DC-04 for Bill Smith for installing a 340- Cover Crop at 100% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$2,732.00.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-03 (Tvedt) Encumbrance

John Tvedt of Byron, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crop, installed in Section 12 of Canisteo Township. The estimated cost for the practice is \$2,359.20 and they are requesting 100% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$2,359.20. Currently there is \$56,368.00 left to encumber, and there will be \$54,008.80, remaining to encumber once approved. A motion was made to encumber the cost-share contract 2025-SHD-DC-03 for John Tvedt for installing a 340- Cover Crop at 100% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$2,359.20.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Other New Business

No other new business.

Correspondence & Staff Report

There were no correspondence or staff reports.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be held Tuesday, October 14, 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.

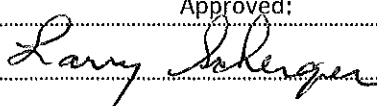
Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Larry Scherger, Chair, called for a motion for adjournment at 9:42 PM.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	10-16-25	Allison English

