



DODGE
SWCD

Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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Minutes of the February 18, 2025 Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 6:30 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; Allison English, Administrative Professional.

Approval of Meeting Agenda: There were no additions to the February 18, 2025 board meeting agenda. A motion was made to approve the February 18, 2025 meeting agenda as presented.

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

Approval of January 28, 2025

Board Meeting Minutes: There were no corrections to the January 28, 2025 board meeting minutes. A motion was made to approve the January 28, 2025 board meeting minutes.

Motion: David Livingston
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, was unable to attend the meeting.

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.

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 January 2025 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$9,328.53, expenditures of \$37,583.30, the general ledger and aging summary, with a payables total of \$585.19. A motion was made to approve the January 2025 Treasurer's Report, and pay bills on the aging summary, for a payables total of \$585.19.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Employee Re-filing Fees and Reimbursements

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors the re-filing has been completed. The affected employees had previously received W2c's for 2021, 2022, and 2023 for the PERA. King is requesting a reimbursement of the total cost of \$722.00 for the amended tax returns completed by his CPA. Jessica Klingfus, Conservation Technician, has chosen to file her own amended tax returns and is requesting a reimbursement for her time for a total of \$791.88 (12 hours x \$65.99). King stated that the issue with PERA has affected Klingfus since 2018. Allison English, Administrative Professional, stated we are only able to provide W2c's for 3 prior years and affected employees would not be able to do amended taxes for the later years. Jessica Klingfus, Conservation Technician, is requesting reimbursement for the overpayment in taxes due to the PERA error form for years 2018-2020, a total of \$1,428.00.

Adam King, District Manager, reported we have the total for each employee affected by the health insurance error. Allison English, Administrative Professional, calculated the totals for each employee using the current tax rates for both Social Security and Medicare taxes for the years 2022-2024. King presented to the supervisors the letters needed for each employee and the board to sign stating the affected employee will not file for a refund of the overage and the district will reimburse the amounts; the district will file for the refund for both employee and employer portions. Jessica Klingfus, Conservation Technician, Zac Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician, and Samantha Rojo, previous Administrative Professional, were affected. Klingfus is requesting reimbursement for the overpayment in Social Security and Medicare taxes, a total of \$710.84 for all four quarters of 2022-2023 and quarters 1-3 of 2024 and has signed the required letter. Colton is requesting a reimbursement for the overpayment of Social Security and Medicare taxes, a total of \$58.16 for quarter 3 of 2024 and has signed the required letter. Rojo is requesting reimbursement for the overpayment of Social Security and Medicare taxes, a total of \$817.46 for all four quarters of 2022-2023, but she has not signed the required letter.

A motion was made to pay the refiling fees for King and reimburse Klingfus for her time spent refiling due to the PERA error for years 2021-2023, reimburse Klingfus for the overpayment of taxes for the years 2018-2020, refund Klingfus and Colton for the overpayment of Social Security and Medicare taxes , approved the board to sign the letters for each affected employee, and to refund Rojo for the overpayment of Social Security and Medicare taxes once we received the signed letter back.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Southeast Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employee (MACDE) Dues and Spring Meeting

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors of the mission and accomplishments of the SE MACDE. King also informed that the yearly employee fees are due and are \$10 per employee. With 3 total employees for this year the total would be \$30. The spring meeting is taking place on March 26, 2025 and the registration is \$20 per employee that attends. A motion was made to pay the yearly fees for total of \$30 and to pay for the registration for any employee that would like to attend the Spring Meeting.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Policy Handbook Updates

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that after a few staff have had deaths in their family, some concerns about the bereavement policy have been brought up. Currently, the SWCD offers up to 5 days of sick leave if a death occurs in the immediate family. King presented other districts' bereavement policies. The supervisors discussed the policy. A motion was made to update the bereavement policy to three days paid by the district if a death occurs in the immediate family.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Cell Phone Policy Changes

Adam King, District Manager, advised that Zac Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician, is requesting a Dodge and Soil and Water Conservation district owned cell phone. The cost for the new cell phone will be free and the cost of the 4G Custom Business Unlimited Plan is \$50.70/ month plus associated fees. A motion was made to approve Dodge SWCD to purchase a cell phone for Zac Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician, and pay the associated monthly costs.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

ESRI Renewal Quotation

Adam King, District Manager, advised the supervisors that ESRI is moving to a subscription-based service for the new ARCPRO license and the existing ESRI ArcMap will no longer have support offered. The cost for the subscription is \$2,200 per year. The staff is requesting an additional extension for specific tools, each extension is \$650. A motion was made to switch the to the subscription- based ESRI service for an annual cost of \$2,200 and add the additional extension requested by staff for \$650. A total of \$2,850.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

Computer Upgrades

Adam King, District Manager, informed the supervisors that Zac Colton's, Soil Health Conservation Technician, and Allison English's, Administrative Professional, computers are slow and becoming old, one computer is 9 years old and the other 8 years old. Techright Services, our IT support contractor has provided a quote for two new computers. English's computer would be \$1,295.00 and Colton's computer would be \$2,325.00, coming in at a little bit of a higher cost due to needing to run more programs. King also informed the supervisors, USDA has notified us that we are unable to keep our equipment in the same server rack as the USDA equipment. We need to move our switch and firewall. Techright Services will be providing us a quote for a new small rack for our equipment. A motion was made to approve the purchase of two staff computers for English and Colton. A total of \$3,620.00.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Minnesota Soil Health Coalition 2025 Dues

The Minnesota Soil Health Coalition has notified that Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District that our membership is up for renewal. Memberships with the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition starts at \$25.00/ year. A motion was made to approve renewing the membership with the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition and paying \$25.00 for 2025 dues.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

BWSR Soil Health Practices Grant Request for Interest

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has released their Soil Health Practices Grant Request for Interest. The grant is to provide financial and technical assistance for soil health practices that achieve water quality, soil productivity, climate resiliency, and/or carbon sequestration benefits, and is enabled through the United States Department of Agriculture- National Resources Conservation Service (USDA- NCPS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and Minnesota's Clean Water Fund. The Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is able to receive an initial base grant of \$180,000 (\$150,000 Federal, \$30,000 State.) Once 80% of the funds are encumbered, the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District can request additional grants of up to \$120,000 monthly. All funds must be spent by December 31, 2028. A motion was made to approve the SWCD to submit the BWSR's Soil Health Practices Grant Request for Interest for the maximum of \$180,000.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-14 Montgomery Cancellation

Bradley Montgomery of West Concord, MN is notifying the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District that he is requesting to cancel Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024-DC-14 for a waterway clean out project in section 9 of Concord Township. A written letter from Bradley Montgomery was presented to the supervisors. A motion was made to cancel the Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024-DC-14 and unencumber the funds and make them available for future projects.

Motion: Rick Alberts

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

District Cost- Share Contract 2025WAGZ-DC-01 Thomforde Encumbrance

Larry Thomforde of Zumbrota, MN is requesting cost-share assistance from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 351- Well Decommissioning will be installed in Section 8 of Milton. The practice will provide groundwater pollution prevention benefits. The estimated cost for the practice is \$4,430.00 and he is requesting to encumber 75%, not to exceed \$3,000.00. A motion was made to approve the cost-share contract 2025 WAGZ-DC-01 for Larry Thomforde to install at 351- Well Decommissioning at a 75% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$3,000.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

Personnel Committee Recommendations

Adam King, District Manager, submitted his Letter of Resignation on Monday, February 10, 2025 with his resignation effective Friday, March 07, 2025. King discussed options for replacement with the Personnel Committee, including shifting staff responsibilities and hiring a District Manager from within, then posting for a technician position; posting for and hiring a District Manager ourselves, or using the Southeast Minnesota Service Cooperative. King presented a quote of \$11,500 from Southeast Minnesota Service Cooperative to assist with the posting, ranking, scoring, interviewing questions, offers, reference checks and background checks. The supervisors' discussed the options presented. An Employee Jessica Klingfus, Conservation Technician, has expressed interest in the position and has been with the district since 2017. The supervisors discussed offering Klingfus an interim District Manager Position. A motion was made to authorize the Personnel Committee to meet with Klingfus to discuss and offer the interim District Manager Position, and discuss posting for a technician on 2/19/2025.

With Adam King's, District Manager, resignation, he will need to be replaced as a signer on the financial accounts. King suggested Klingfus to be the signer so we have a signer in office. A motion was made to add Jessica Klingfus as a signer to the MBT Checking and Saving accounts and Heritage Bank Checking and CD accounts and to remove Adam King as a signer on the MBT Checking and Saving accounts and Heritage Bank Checking and CD accounts.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously

Other New Business

There was no Other New Business

Correspondence & Staff Report

Adam King, District Manager, reported working with the Cedar River and Zumbro River's Joint Powers Boards to finalize year end paperwork. King informed the supervisors, Zac Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician will be having a Soil Health Day in March. King reported Allison English, Administrative Professional, has been busy working on the 941x's and Jessica Klingfus, Conservation Technician has been finalizing designs.

Supervisor Reports

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, reported the Cedar River Watershed District Board meeting has been cancelled for February 19, 2025. Livingston had a meeting with the Cedar River Watershed District Policy Committee on 2/5/2025. The Board Soil and Water Resources sent out an assessment program survey for the mid-plan assessment. The middle plan

assessment is coming up for the Cedar- Wapsipinicon Watershed District. A database is going to be created to show the watershed, projects progress, and the hotspots. The subscription was approved for an initial set-up cost of \$12,000 and \$6,000 cost per year.

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, reported attending the I-90 tour in Stewartville, MN on February 6, 2025. Hahn shared there were three speakers and all three were interesting. The first speaker shared information on 35 years of research of cover crops and crop rotation. The second speaker shared information about ^{compost} ~~composite~~ extracts. The third speaker shared information on developing a crop rotation. Hahn also shared he will be attending the Root River meeting on 2/24/2025.

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, reported attending the Zumbro River Policy Committee Meeting and they were unable to elect a chair due to not having enough committee members there to appoint and the member being appointed did not attend the meeting. The financial summary for 22-23 and the financial progress for 24-25 were reviewed. Scherger also attending the SESWCD JBP Meeting.

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.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be held Tuesday, March 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 9:34 P.M.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	3-18-25	Allison English