



# Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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## Minutes of the December 16, 2025

Dodge Soil & Water Conservation District

Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting

*The meeting was called to order by Larry Scherger, Board Chair, at 6:30 P.M.*

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

**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; Nathan Bird, District Conservationist, United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Approval of Meeting Agenda:** There were five additions to the December 16, 2025 agenda include adding '2025-SHD-DC-01 (Biwer) Payment', '2025-SHD-DC-03 (Smith) Payment', '2025 SHD-DC-04 (Tvedt) Payment', '2025-SHD-DC-05 (Alberts Brothers LLC) Payment', and '2024 WAGZ-DC-16 (Albert Brothers LLC) Payment' under 'New Business'. A motion was made to approve the December 16, 2025 meeting agenda, as revised.

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

### Approval of November 18, 2025

**Board Meeting Minutes:** There is one correction to the November 18, 2025 board meeting minutes. On page 6 change 'Freerksen' to 'Hahn' as the second for the action item 'District Cost Share Contract 2023-11 (Severson Trust) Amendment'. A motion was made to approve the November 18, 2025 board meeting minutes, as corrected.

Motion: David Livingston  
Seconded: Glenn Hahn  
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, shared Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) plans are starting for 2026. Neighboring Natural Resource Conservation Service offices are setting up a meeting. With the Dodge office assisting with other offices work, a plan is needed to bring operations as close to uniform between offices as possible. The CRP and EQIP deadlines moved to the end of January. CSP contracts in the office are being wrapped up and completed. The Hayfield Waterway project has been finished. A 700 million pilot program called the USDA Regenerative Agricultural Program is to be added on to EQIP funding. The program will use farm plans/ inventory plans to evaluate resources and come up with a full farm plan to address all the concerns. All concerns need to be addressed to get the incentive. There is not a lot of information out of this yet. Bird will share more information when available.

### **Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Report**

Ann Gunness, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, shared 3 updates via email. The first update is regarding Soil Health Practices RCPP funding. There is \$11,400,000 in funding remaining and the equals out to around 95 additional grants left. The second update is regarding Soil Health Delivery RFI. The Soil Health RFI opened December 2 and closed January 5. The grant is similar to last years with one change, only half the previous amount will be awarded this cycle because last time covered two fiscal years. Requests can be made through e-link. The total funding allocation for this grant is \$9.4 million. The third update is regarding the Clean Water Competitive Projects and Practices Grant. This grant will open February 11 and close March 26. This funding can be used for shovel- ready projects such as stormwater management, erosion control, and other water quality improvements. Up to half of the 6 million allocated, 50% is targeted to support drinking water protection.

### **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 November 2025 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$11,433.74, expenditures of \$87,068.60, the general ledger and aging summary, with a payables total of \$2,259.96. A motion was made to approve the November 2025 Treasurer's Report, and pay bills on the aging summary, for a payables total of \$2,259.96.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

## Supervisor Reports

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

David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, attended the Cedar River Meeting on November 11th. The Red Rock Project requires more permitting than originally expected, and the project will take longer than planned. The funding for this project is a 50/50 match and the watershed district is working with Hormel to get the remaining funding needed. Livingston shared the Tap In Water testing event is available in Olmsted and Mower Counties for arsenic levels in water.

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

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor, attended the <sup>Look</sup> Cedar River Meeting on November 21st. A financial update and the 2026 budget were presented and discussed. The Cedar River has also reduced priorities on the Watershed District. Currently, CRWD had 73 priorities and were taking the shot gun approach. With the reduction in priorities, they are hoping for a

more measurable approach. Hahn shared the CDs have been renewed as of December 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2026 budget was finalized at a finance meeting on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor**

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, did not provide a report.

**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**

**Review Encumbered Non- Structural Projects**

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, shared there has been no new encumbered Non-Structural Projects approved since the last board meeting.

**2026 Final Budget**

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, presented the 2026 Final Budget to the supervisors and informed them the budget includes the Dodge County allocation of \$150,000.00. Klingfus and the finance committee met on December 8, 2025 and reviewed the budget. The supervisors discussed the 2026 final budget. A motion was made to approve the 2026 Final Budget as presented.

Motion: David Livingston

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously

**New Business**

**2025 Cost-of-Living Increase**

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, presented information on cost-of-living increases from those receiving Social Security, Dodge County employees, and potential federal employees. Klingfus also presented the current district wage scale and at various percentage increases. A motion was made to approve a 3% cost-of-living increase for Dodge SWCD Employees.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Glenn Hahn

The motion carried unanimously.

**Personnel Committee Recommendations for 2025**

The Personnel Committee met on Monday, December 15, 2025 to review employee annual evaluations conducted by Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, and conduct the District Manager employee evaluation. The Personnel Committee recommends a step increase for Allison English, Administrative Professional, from step 6 to step 5, a step increase for Zachary Colton, Soil Health Conservation Technician, from step 6 to step 5, a step increase for Joe Newman, Conservation Technician, from Step 7 to Step 6, and a step increase for Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, from step 6 to step 5.

The Personnel Committee recommends that Newman will be able to start using Annual Leave after 1/1/2026. A motion was made to approve the Personnel Committee recommendations for step increases for each employee and use of annual leave for Newman.

Motion: Glenn Hahn

Seconded: Bruce Freerksen

The motion carried unanimously.

### **RCPP Ranking**

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, presented the third 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 55 points. A motion was made to fund the project scoring 55 points first, and the second project scoring 30 points second, if funding allows.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carries.

### **Handbook Policy Update**

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, shared staff have recommended an update to the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Policy Handbook. Staff recommended updating the policy related to earned compensatory time located under COMPENSATORY TIME AND OVER-TIME PAY on page 45 of the District Policy Handbook.

The Current Policy:

Overtime by District staff can be taken as compensatory time off or overtime pay at the rate of one and one-half (1 1/2) hours for each hour worked beyond the accepted work schedule. Compensatory time should not accrue to more than 60 hours, with the 60 hours representing forty (40) hours of overtime actually worked at the one and one-half (1 1/2) premium rate. Upon reaching 60 hours, the employee should use compensatory time before receiving further overtime compensation in the form of compensatory time. Compensatory time can be used at any time with notice to the District Manager, and the sixty-hour (60) maximum does not have to be accrued before compensatory time may be used. Compensatory time must be used before annual leave is to be used. All remaining compensatory time should be used by the end of each year or upon termination of employment.

The proposed Policy:

Overtime by District staff can be taken as compensatory time off or overtime pay at the rate of one and one-half (1 1/2) hours for each hour worked beyond the accepted work schedule. Compensatory time should not accrue to more than 60 hours, with the 60 hours representing forty (40) hours of overtime actually worked at the one and one-half (1 1/2) premium rate. Upon reaching 60 hours, the employee should use compensatory time before receiving further overtime compensation in the form of compensatory time. Compensatory time can be used at any time with notice to the District Manager, and the sixty-hour (60) maximum does not have to be accrued before compensatory time may be used. Compensatory time *should* be used before annual leave is to be used. *Compensatory time up to sixty-hour (60) maximum may be carried over to the following year.* ~~All remaining compensatory time should be used by the end of each year or upon termination of employment.~~

A motion was made to approve the staff recommended update to the Policy Handbook for the policy related to compensatory time located under COMPENSATORY TIME AND OVER-TIME PAY on page 45 of the District Policy Handbook.

Motion: Bruce Freerksen

Seconded: Rick Alberts

The motion carried unanimously.

**District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-01 (Biwer) Payment**

Jack Biwer of Dodge Center, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crops, installed in Section 11 of Wasioja Township. The final cost for the practice is \$3,639.60 and they are requesting 100% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$3,639.60. A motion was made to approve the final payment for the District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-01 for Jack Biwer for installing a 340- Cover Crops at 100% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$3,639.60.

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

**District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-03 (Smith) Payment**

Bill Smith of West Concord, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crops, installed in Section 23 of Concord Township. The final 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. A motion was made to approve the final payment for the District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-03 for Bill Smith for installing a 340- Cover Crops at 100% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$2,732.00.

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

**District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-04 (Tvedt) Payment**

John Tvedt of Byron, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crops, installed in Section 12 of Canisteo Township. The final cost for the practice is \$2,060.60 and they are requesting 100% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$2,060.60. A motion was made to approve the final payment for the District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-04 for John Tvedt for installing a 340- Cover Crops at 100% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$2,060.60.

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

**District Cost-Share Contract 2025 SHD-DC-05 (Albert Brothers LLP) Payment**

Alberts Brothers LLP of Pine Island, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crops, installed in Section 15 of Milton Township. The final cost for the practice is \$3,660.00 and they are requesting 100% of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$3,660.00. A motion was made to approve the final payment for the District Cost-Share Contract 2025-SHD-DC-05 for Albert Brothers LLP for installing a 340- Cover Crop at 100% of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$3,660.00.

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
Rick Alberts abstained.  
The motion carried.

**Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024 WAGZ-DC-16 (Albert Brothers LLP) Payment**

Alberts Brothers LLP of Pine Island, MN is requesting cost-share payment from the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District for a 340- Cover Crops, installed in Section 11 of Milton Township. The final cost for the practice is 13,500.00 and they are requesting 1/3 of the total cost of the project, not to exceed \$4,500.00. A motion was made to approve the final

payment for the Watershed Cost-Share Contract 2024WAGZ-DC-16 for Albers Brothers LLP for installing a 340- Cover Crops for 1/3 of the total cost of the entire project, not to exceed \$4,500.00.

Motion: Glenn Hahn  
Seconded: Bruce Freerksen  
Rick Albers abstained.  
The motion carried.

**Other New Business**

No new business.

**Correspondence & Staff Report**

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, shared the 2017 Ford Focus has been sold for \$7,500. The Jeep’s power steering went out and it had to be towed to the dealership for repair. The tow was charged towards the cars warranty. The dealership sent photos of the issue. The wires have been damaged by a rodent chewing on the harness containing the power steering lines and this needs to be replaced. Klingfus filed a claim with M.C.I.T insurance. The claim has been processed and we will receive a refund for the cost of the fix minus our \$500 deductible. Klingfus shared both the CDs have been renewed for 6 months at a 4.25% interest. Klingfus shared the PRAP grant has been awarded for \$5,000 and the FY26 Buffer Law approved for \$20,000. Klingfus shared FY26 Soil Health Delivery for \$30,000 has been requested but not approved. Staff are inquiring about the interseeder runner interest for this year. Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, advised the supervisors FY23 Buffer Law and FY23 Local Capacity has been closed out and all funds have been exhausted. Klingfus shared David Livingston, District IV Supervisor, has moved into Dodge Center out and of his district. Livingston will continue out his remaining time in the secretary seat until elections come in November 2026.


**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:30 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 for adjournment at 9:05 PM.

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

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	1-20-26	Allison English