



Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District

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Dodge Center, Minnesota 55927

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Minutes of the November 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
David Livingston, Secretary
Bruce Freerksen, PR&I (entered at 8:14 P.M.)
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; Annie Gunness, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

Approval of Meeting Agenda: There were three additions to the November 18, 2025 agenda include adding 'Nonstructural Contracts' under Unfinished Business, adding 'National Association of Conservation District (NACD) Dues', and 'District Cost-Share Contract 2023-11(Severson Trust) Amendment' under 'New Business'. A motion was made to approve the November 18, 2025 meeting agenda, as revised.

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

Approval of September 16, 2025

Board Meeting Minutes:

Corrections to the October 14, 2025 board meeting minutes include changing 'Rick Alberts' to 'Bruce Freerksen' on the forth page under 'Paid Family Medical Leave', change 'Bruce Freerksen' with 'Rick Alberts' on the fourth page under 'No Till Drill Winter Storage', change 'Glenn Hahn' to 'Bruce Freerksen' on page five under '2025 MASWCD Resolutions', change 'December 15, 2025' to 'November 18, 2025' on page five under 'Next Meeting', and change 'David Livingston' to 'Bruce Freerksen' on page five under 'Adjournment' A motion was made to approve the October 14, 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 Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has been back in the office since November 13 and Farm Service Agency (FSA) has been back for a couple of weeks to process payments and certain tasks. Bird shared some of the Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) systems are still down and are not functioning as normal but should be back up shortly. Bird shared the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) programs should be opening in late spring.

Bird shared two events with the supervisors: Premier Soil Health on December 2-3, 2025 in Mankato, MN, and MN Cattle Industry Convention on December 4-6, 2025 in Saint Cloud, MN.

Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Report

Ann Gunness, Board Conservationist, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, shared the Manure Management Grant is open on E-link through December 18, 2025. The focus of this grant is for ground water protection. Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is not going to broadcast this grant broadly. The Joint Powers Board (JPB) will apply for Area 7 funds and distribute to different counties. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant has 12 million in funding left. The Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) and operational grant funding will be rolling out. Gunness shared Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, reached out to her to get information on the PRAP grant for strategic planning. She shared there is a grant that can be used to hire a contractor and charge staff time to complete a strategic plan with \$90,000 left in the grant. Gunness also share we could use the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for no fee.

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 September 2025 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$22,805.93, expenditures of \$46,385.73, and the general ledger.

Glenn Hahn, Treasurer, presented the October 2025 Financial Report, including the Balance Sheet covering what is in checking and savings, revenues of \$8,343.64, expenditures of \$55,696.63, the general ledger and aging summary, with a payables total of \$2,799.02. A motion was made to approve the September and October 2025 Treasurer's Report, and pay bills on the aging summary, for a payables total of \$2,799.02.

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

Certificates of Deposit Renewal

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, informed the supervisors the two Certificate of Deposit (CD)s are set to mature on 11/26/2025. The district's two CDs are currently in a 3-month term with a 4.65% interest rate. The supervisors discussed the length for the next term and if the interest should be accrued as revenue or added to the balance of the Certificate of Deposit (CD). The supervisors discussed the amount of money in the district's other bank/savings accounts. After some discussion, the decision was made to roll the two 3- month Certification of Deposits for \$100,000 and the interest earned

into two 6-month term CDs with a 4.32% interest rate. A motion was made to renew both the Certificate of Deposits for 6-month terms at a 4.32% interest rate and to add the interest to the CD total.

Motion: Rick Alberts

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 October 15, 2025. The hearings have been set for the future project in the area. The Cedar River Watershed District discussed Paid Medical and Family Leave (PMFL) and they do not have any paid employees and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts will be covering employees apart of the Cedar River Watershed District. Livingston shared 9 million dollars in flood funding has been approved with 2 million dollars needing to be matched. The Watershed District is hopeful the city of Austin will provide money for the project out by the airport. Many homes in that area are affected by flooding and this will be a large project. The Watershed District is working on getting the owners, city, and everyone involved on the same page. Livingston shared the Orchard Creek project is pretty much completed. Livingston shared a Reginal Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) funding update; the Mower SWCD is on the third round of funding. There are cover crops and strip till projects already set up for fall and two more bigger projects in the works.

Glenn Hahn, District V Supervisor

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

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor

Larry Scherger, District III Supervisor, attended the Zumbro Watershed District Policy Committee meeting. During that meeting they went over Watershed Based Implementation (WBIF) Funding and Scherger shared the spreadsheets with the supervisors. The workplan summary for the Zumbro Reginal Water Trail project and Scherger provided the handout with information on all three projects involved with the supervisors. Scherger shared overall the Zumbro Watershed District Policy meeting went well.

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, reviewed the encumbered Non-Structural Projects approved since the last board meeting.

Non-Structural Contracts Encumbered Since Last Board Meeting							
Funding Source	Contract Holder	Practice	Acres	Contract Amount	Sediment (TSS T/yr)	Nitrogen (lbs/ac/yr)	Phos (lbs/ry)
Soil Health Practices(RCPP)	20-2-1	Strip Till	442.01 x 3yrs	\$39,780.90	88.40	2,033.25	353.61
Soil Health Practices(RCPP)	20-2-3	Strip Till	152.62 x 1yr	\$4,578.60	30.60	703.80	122.40

New Business

Technology Subscriptions for 2025

Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District staff are still using all of the technology subscriptions purchased in the last year.

Current technology subscriptions and renewals include:

- WeWorked: \$277.99/year (same price as 2025)
- DocuSign: \$300.00/year (same price as 2025)
- Microsoft: \$6.00/employee/month (\$288.00/year) (same price as 2025)
- Adobe Acrobat: \$386.29/year (adding another license, \$179.88/yr/license before taxes)
- QuickBooks Payroll: \$700.00/year plus \$7.00/employee/paycheck (up from \$506.07)
- Canva Teams: \$149.90/year (same price as 2025)
- Remote Management: \$3.80/computer/month (\$410.40/year)

Staff recommended keeping WeWorked as our time keeping program, DocuSign, Microsoft 365 account (includes Teams, OneDrive, and SharePoint), QuickBooks Payroll, Remote Management and Canva Teams. Staff also recommends adding an additional Adobe Acrobat Standard license. A motion was made to keep all current subscriptions and add a 2nd adobe license.

Motion: Glen Hahn

Seconded: David Livingston

The motion carried unanimously.

Paid Medical and Family Leave

With the Minnesota Paid Leave effective January 1, 2026, staff shared the need to update the handbook to include verbiage on our Paid Medical and Family Leave (PMFL) policy. Along with the Paid Medical and Family Leave (PMFL) policy staff recommend to add verbiage on Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave.

MINNESOTA PAID LEAVE

Effective January 1, 2026, eligible employees may qualify for paid leave under the Minnesota Paid Leave ("MN Paid Leave") law, which provides partial wage replacement to eligible employees. The Dodge SWCD will cover the employee's and employer's portions of the premiums for MN Paid Leave. Employees may elect to use accrued sick, annual, and/or personal leave on top of MN Paid Leave benefits to supplement full income.

Eligible employees may apply for MN Paid Leave benefits based on qualifying events for medical care related to pregnancy, childbirth, bonding leave, family care, military family leave, safety leave, or the employee's own serious health condition as set forth in Minnesota law. Paid leave will be administered by the Commissioner of the Department of Employment and Economic Development. The Dodge SWCD will work with a third party private paid leave provider- ShelterPoint. The Dodge SWCD will comply with Federal and State laws while working with ShelterPoint for claims.

When an employee's need for MN Paid Leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide at least 30 days advance notice to the SWCD. If 30 days advance notice is not practicable because of a lack of knowledge of approximately when leave will be required to begin, a change in circumstances, or a medical emergency, notice must be given as soon as practicable. Notice must be given in writing to the employee's District Manager. An employee requesting leave taken intermittently shall provide a schedule of needed workdays off as soon as practicable and must make a reasonable effort to schedule the intermittent leave so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the SWCD. Intermittent leave may be taken in half day (4 hour) or full day (8 hour) increments or upon manager discretion.

Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave shall run concurrently with MN Paid Leave when taken for the same qualifying purpose.

MINNESOTA PREGNANCY AND PARENTING LEAVE

An employee may take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave who is (1) a biological or adoptive parent in conjunction with the birth or adoption of a child; or (2) a female employee for prenatal care, or incapacity due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related health conditions. Parental leave due to birth or adoption of a child must begin within twelve (12) months of the birth or adoption. However, if a child must remain in the hospital longer than the mother, the leave must begin within twelve (12) months after the child leaves the hospital. The start of the leave and length of the leave shall be determined by the employee but may not exceed twelve (12) weeks.

When the need for leave under this policy is foreseeable, the employee must provide at least 30 days advance notice. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee should provide notice as soon as practical.

Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting leave shall run concurrently with Minnesota Paid Leave. Employees may substitute accrued sick leave, annual leave, or comp time for any leave taken under this policy.

During any leave for which an employee is entitled to benefits or leave under this section, the SWCD shall maintain coverage under any group insurance policy, group subscriber contract, or health care plan for the employee and any dependents as if the employee was not on leave, provided, however, that the employee must continue to pay any employee share of the cost of the benefits.

The SWCD will not discharge, discipline, penalize, interfere with, or otherwise retaliate or discriminate against an employee for asserting parental leave rights or remedies.

Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave shall run concurrently with any MN Paid Leave when taken for the same qualifying purpose.

A motion was made to add the verbiage needed for Paid Family and Medical Leave and Minnesota Pregnancy and Parenting Leave to the Employee handbook.

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: Glenn Hahn
The motion carries.

Finance and Personnel Meetings

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, advised the supervisors a finance meeting is needed to go over and approve the final audit before it is presented at the December Board Meeting. The meeting would need to be before December 16th. The supervisors' part of the finance meeting discussed their availability- no meeting date is set.

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, advised the supervisors a personnel meeting is needed to go over and approve employee review and cost of living increases. The supervisors' part of the finance meeting discussed their availability. The meeting is set up for December 15th.

2025 National Association of Conservation District Dues (NACD)

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, informed the supervisors the National Association of Conservation District dues will be invoiced to us shortly. The structure of the dues is set up in different tiers depending on how much the district pays. The different tiers are- Contributor (\$1-100), Bronze (\$101-\$500), Silver (\$501-\$774), Gold (\$775-1,775), Diamond (\$1776-\$3000), and Platinum (\$3001+). The district has contributed \$250 in the past. The supervisors discussed the different tiers. A motion was made to continue contributing \$250 and staying in the bronze tier.

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

District Cost-Share Contract 2023-11 (Severson Trust) Amendment

Calmer Severson Trust of Hayfield, MN is requesting an amendment to the District Cost-Share Contract 2023-11. The estimated cost for the practice was \$21,824.00 and he is requesting to encumber 75%, not to exceed \$16,368.00. A request is needed to change the contract expiration date from 11/30/2025 to 09/30/2026 due to adverse weather and crop harvesting. Currently there is \$32,944.36 left to encumber, and there will be \$16,576.36 remaining to encumber once approved. A motion was made to approve the request to extend the contract expiration.

November 18, 2025 Dodge SWCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

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

Motion: David Livingston
Seconded: ~~Glenn Freerksen~~
The motion carried unanimously.

Other New Business

2017 Ford Focus Sale

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, shared with the supervisors there has been interest in purchasing the 2017 Ford Focus. The supervisors discussed selling the Focus. To sell the Ford Focus, three offers are needed. The first offer is from Carvana for \$3,100. The second offer is from Carfax for \$8,410. The third offer will be from the potential buyer. The supervisors decided they will take an offer for at least \$7,500. A motion was made to accept the best offer for at least \$7,500.

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

PRAP Strategic Planning

Jessica Klingfus, District Manager, shared she is interested in completing a strategic planning for the district. The supervisor's discussed applying for the grant for strategic planning for staff time. A motion was made to apply for the strategic planning grant and start the process of completing a strategic plan.

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

Correspondence & Staff Report

No other correspondence or staff reports.

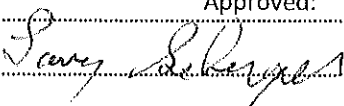
Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Dodge Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors will be held Tuesday, December 16, 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 9:01 PM.

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

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	12-15-25	Allison English