

AITKIN COUNTY SWCD
307 2nd STREET NW, ROOM #216
AITKIN, MN 56431

Minutes of the Aitkin County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at the Aitkin County Government Center, 3rd Floor Training Room. Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Dan Gravley, Vice Chair. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Those present were:

Dan Gravley, Vice Chair
Bob Janzen, Treasurer
Tom Fasteland, Secretary/Reporter
Francis Dierickx, Supervisor
Janet Smude, District Manager
Lori Nelson, District Secretary
Jake Janski, Area III Director

Those absent were:

Franklin Turnock, Chair

Addition to the agenda.

-MACDE Membership Request for employees

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the agenda with an addition. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve the December 17, 2024 minutes. Approved unanimously.

TREASURERS REPORT

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to accept the December financial statement. Approved unanimously.

CHECKS WRITTEN

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve checks written. Approved unanimously.

PROJECT COORDINATOR/BRIAN ROULET

Brian introduced himself to the SWCD Board.

DISTRICT TECHNICIAN POSITION

The District Technician accepted the position and will start on Monday, February 3, 2025.

JAKE JANSKI/AREA III DIRECTOR

Jake gave an update on Area III. Committee assignments are open until January 31, 2025. Committees are Awards, Legislative, Finance and Resolutions.

No expense to the district. Area III pays per diem and expenses are paid by the State.

Area III Resolutions Meeting is June 6, 2025

Area III Fall meeting is September 8, 2025 in Mora

There were 757 registrants which includes vendors etc. for the MASWCD Annual Convention—530 were SWCD staff and supervisors (77 of the 88 SWCD districts were represented).

All resolutions passed except for one.

Area III will be looking for a Treasurer this fall.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A motion was made by Tom Fastland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to nominate Dan Gravley as Chair. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Tom Fastland and seconded by Bob Janzen to nominate Francis Dierickx as Vice Chair. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Dan Gravley and seconded by Francis Dierickx to nominate Franklin Turnock as Secretary. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Tom Fastland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to nominate Bob Janzen as Treasurer. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Dan Gravley and seconded by Bob Janzen to nominate Tom Fasteland as Reporter. Approved unanimously.

2025 OFFICERS

Dan Gravley, Chair
Francis Dierickx, Vice Chair
Bob Janzen, Treasurer
Franklin Turnock, Secretary
Tom Fasteland, Reporter

DESIGNATE BANKS AND NEWSPAPER

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to designate Security State Bank and Bremer Bank as the official banks. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Tom Fasteland to designate the Aitkin Independent Age as the official newspaper. Approved unanimously.

2025 IRS MILEAGE RATE/.70

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve the current 2025 IRS mileage rate. Approved unanimously.

2025 ANNUAL DUES

AREA III DUES/\$600

A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Bob Janzen to pay \$600 to Area III for dues. Approved unanimously.

MASWCD DUES/\$7425.09

A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Tom Fasteland to pay MASWCD \$7425.09 for dues. Approved unanimously.

BILLS OVER \$3000

TODD COUNTY SOIL & WATER, BRD 1W1P/\$4479.20

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve payment of \$4479.20 to Todd County Soil & Water. Approved unanimously.

TODD COUNTY SOIL & WATER, BRD 1W1P/\$3626.24

A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Tom Fasteland to approve payment of \$3626.24 to Todd County Soil & Water. Approved unanimously.

MN COUNTIES INTERGOVERNMENTAL TRUST/MCIT, \$12,846

A motion was made by Bob Janzen and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve payment to MCIT \$12,846. Approved unanimously.

AIS CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH AITKIN COUNTY

Discussion. Aitkin County will take \$40,000 for the Sheriff's Dept. before Aitkin County SWCD receives the AIS \$. A new agreement needs to be signed.

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to sign the new AIS Contract Agreement with Aitkin County. Approved unanimously.

2024 AUDIT SERVICES

Janet contacted Peterson Company/Waconia, MN. They will get back to the Aitkin County SWCD with a bid for services.

PERSONNEL POLICY UPDATE

-Adjust the Probationary Period language to allow for use of earned sick leave to comply with the Earned Sick & Safe Time law.

-Remove the comp time rate of 1.5 hrs. for hours worked on Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

-Remove taxable fringe language

-Adjust Earned Sick and Safe Time language

-Remove references to NRCS computer usage.

A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Tom Fastland to approve changes to the Personnel Policy. Approved unanimously

2025 Envirothon/\$250

The 2025 Area III Envirothon is May 5, 2025 at the Cloquet Forestry Center. The State Envirothon is May 19, 2025 at Wolf Ridge. Volunteers are needed.

A motion was made by Tom Fastland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to pay \$250 to the Area III Envirothon. Approved unanimously.

OTHER

MACDE MEMBERSHIP REQUEST

A request was made for \$25 per employee to be a part of the MACDE Employees Association. A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Bob Janzen to pay \$25 per employee for MACDE membership. Approved unanimously.

BREAK

SNAKE RIVER REPORT-Dan

A meeting was held on December 30, 2024—reviewed past projects.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT-Janet

- Update on previous employee, Chelsey Koebernick
- One Watershed One Plan updates
- Big Sandy Watershed
- Other Items
 - Health benefits
 - 2 Brief AIS Summary Reports
 - MN Dept. of Ag Nursery Permit
 - Year end billing and annual reporting
 - Water Plan Task Force

SENIOR TECHNICIAN REPORT-Sam

- Riparian buffers

- Culvert Inventory (Hill Lake, Glen & Kimberly will be given culvert inventory data in February or March)
- Soil Health
- Ag Inspector
- Forestry (continue getting credits that are needed, 3 Forest Stewardship Plans)
- Rum River Partnership
- Mississippi GR 1W1P
- Lakeshore restoration
- WCA/Tech. Evaluation Panel

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the Rum River Partnership Statement of Work. Approved unanimously.

SOIL HEALTH & OUTREACH SPECIALIST REPORT-Veronica

SOIL HEALTH

- Soil Health Peer Group
- Projects, working with DNR—need to be on a Commercial Operators list, working with MN DOT to get that.
- Finished up pollution reduction #'s for all the projects completed this year.

OUTREACH

- Ground Water Grant, 4th qtr. report reimbursement
- New ways to use funds and get good information to landowners who may have wells on their property.
- Leadership Training was held in Alexandria last week.
- Rivers & Lakes Fair, presentations for 2025
- Tree & Plant/Seed Sale, on line shopping page doing well—credit card fees is an issue 2.9% plus .30

OTHER

- Master Naturalist presentation at the end of February
- Training courses (outreach, soil health, and reporting)
- 1st newsletter 2025, along with podcast interview with Emile, Cons. Corp.
- Website updates.

PROJECT COORDINATOR-BRIAN

- 2025 AIS Education Grants were sent out
- 2025 AIS Budget was worked on
- AIS Committee meeting scheduled, worked on agenda and looked over minutes
- Reaching out to individuals re: AIS
 - Penmac Staffing, Farm Island Repair, Timber Lake Portables, and DNR

DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST REPORT

Tom is not able to attend today. NRCS Report is in your folder.

TSA3 REPORT-Tom

The TSA3 meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 22, 2025. Hope to discuss filling an engineering position that Mary had.

FARM BILL BIOLOGIST REPORT

Laura is not able to attend today. Farm Bill Biologist report is in your folder.

The next SWCD Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 17, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Aitkin County Government Center.

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to adjourn at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Turnock
Secretary