

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, April 15, 2025 at the Aitkin County Government Center, 3rd Floor Training Room. Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Dan Gravley, Chair. Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Those present were:

Those absent were:

Dan Gravley, Chair
Francis Dierickx, Vice Chair
Bob Janzen, Treasurer
Frank Turnock, Secretary
Tom Fasteland, Reporter
Janet Smude, District Manager
Lori Nelson, District Secretary
Darren Mayers, MN BWSR Board Conservationist

Dennis Thompson will not be able to attend the meeting today. He will come in May.

Darren will be giving a Power Point presentation.

No additions to the agenda.

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Tom Fasteland to approve the March 18, 2025 minutes. Approved unanimously.

TREASURERS REPORT

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Tom Fasteland to accept the March financial statement. Approved unanimously.

CHECKS WRITTEN

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the checks written. Approved unanimously.

DARREN MAYERS/MN BWSR

Darren gave a Power Point presentation, Local Governing Boards/Essential Responsibilities of Local Governing Boards, etc.

RESOLUTIONS/TOM FASTELAND

A resolution re: SFIA was discussed. A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Francis Dierickx to support the SFIA resolution and bring to the Area III Resolution meeting in June. Approved unanimously.

PROJECT PROPOSALS

MCGINN, LAKE MINNEWAWA/BIG SANDY 319, \$12,051.75

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve a cost-share assistance contract on Lake Minnewawa, shoreline stabilization not to exceed \$12,051.75 or 75% of the total eligible cost, whichever is less. Approved unanimously.

MEYSEMBOURG, LAKE MINNEWAWA/BIG SANDY 319, \$6596.25

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve a cost-share assistance contract on Lake Minnewawa, shoreline stabilization not to exceed \$6596.25 or 75% of the total eligible cost, whichever is less. Approved unanimously.

KNUTSON, BIG PINE LAKE/KETTLE RIVER UPPER ST CROIX WATERSHED/\$3320

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve a cost-share assistance contract on Big Pine Lake, shoreline stabilization not to exceed \$3320 or 75% of the total eligible cost, whichever is less. Approved unanimously.

TIM DRAKE, WAGNER TOWNSHIP/512 FORAGE PLANTING/SOIL HEALTH DELIVERY GRANT 25/\$8000

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve a cost-share assistance contract forage planting, Wagner Township not to exceed \$8000 or 75% of the total eligible cost, whichever is less. Approved unanimously.

SOIL HEALTH SPECIALIST/OUTREACH SPECIALIST REPORT-Veronica

Soil Health/Outreach

- Drone presentation
- McGregor Flower Club
- Ag Learn getting account set up for Conservation Planner Level I Certification

Projects

- Slama, Forage Planting, Wagner Township

Outreach

- Leadership Training break until June
- Rivers & Lakes Fair, meeting next Thurs. finalize flyer, presentations are all finalized

Tree, Plant, & Seed Sale

- Online shopping page is still working well and being used (52 orders made online)

Miss. Brd. Outreach

- Water quality/Shoreline restoration trifold finished and ordered.

Other

- Shoreline visits with Ellie to assist first few visits
- Newsletter/May
- Annual Contractor Workshop
- BWSR Training session/Successful Outreach Strategies
- Aitkin County Strategic Plan Summary meeting
- Wetland trifold finished and ordered-- to be used at fairs, site visits and general office outreach.

SWCD INTERN

Applications closed on April 13, 2025. Six people applied for the position. Staff looked through the applications and ranked them, now ready to be interviewed and offer the job.

RUM RIVER 1W1P-Sam

Sam handed out the Rum River 1W1P 2024 Annual Report and went through it.

SENIOR TECHNICIAN REPORT-Sam

- Riparian Buffer Update
- Culvert Inventory, talked to Nordland and Morrison Twp.
- Soil Health, Wagner Twp. forage planting
- Ag Inspector, 2 landowners buckthorn, attended County Ag inspector training, conditions of invasive weed infestations at the City Park
- Forestry-Forest Stewardship Plan update
- Rum River Partnership, attended meeting in Milaca, discussion with partners in the Rum River about EAB and possible outreach and funding through the Rum.

SNAKE RIVER REPORT-Dan

No report.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT-Janet

- One Watershed One Plans
- Big Sandy Watershed
- HSA & VEBA
- Observation Well readings
- Seasonal intern
- HR Basic Training (2 days)

Janet gave an update on Michelle Erickson.

PROJECT COORDINATOR-Brian

AIS Update

- Penmac

- Inspection training set up
- Software on tablets updated
- Farm Island Repair & Richard Murphy decontamination units
- AIS Committee meeting/Approved AIS Education grants
- Completed Level 1 and working on Level 2 AIS training, will also do in person training on April 30.
- Continuing general AIS trainings, via seminars, online training events, workshops, and collaborating with other AIS professionals
- Contractor Workshop/Presented on invasive species, potential impacts, what they can do to help prevent them
- Forestry meeting, forestry site visits with Sam
- General outreach—newsletters, articles etc.

CCFFC is on hold for now.

Frank commented re: BSALWMP meeting. Ellie did a fine job at the meeting as Janet could not attend.

WATERSHED MGMT/WETLAND SPECIALIST REPORT-Ellie

Ellie is absent today. Report was handed out.

FARM BILL BIOLOGIST REPORT-Laura

- Annual Wildland Firefighter Training
- BWSR Training webinar
- Cover Crop webinar
- RIM Critical Shorelands meeting
- Conservation Planner I
- Aitkin/Carlton counties RIM Easement inspections
- Easement update for a landowner, conservation plan and site visit with landowner

TSA 3 REPORT-Tom

Meeting was held on March 26, 2025. TSA3 will be re-advertising for the Tech position. The next meeting will be June 25, 2025 and Tom isn't sure if he will be able to attend. Dan Gravley will probably be able to attend.

NRCS REPORT-Tom

- CSP preapprovals, 5 preapproved
- RCP program, 1 application for Aitkin County FY25
- Certified 19 conservation practices in the last month, Brush Management, Early Successional Habitat Dev. Mgmt., Forest Stand Improvement and Prescribed Burning

- Aitkin USDA Office Staffing Update

The Local Work Group meeting will be held this afternoon from 1-3 p.m.

The next SWCD Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Aitkin County Government Center, 3rd Floor Training Room.

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Tom Fasteland to adjourn at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Turnock
Secretary