

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, March 18, 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

Additions to the agenda:

-Area III Resolutions

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve the agenda with an addition. Approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the February 18, 2025 minutes. Approved unanimously.

TREASURERS REPORT

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to accept the February 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.

POTENTIAL NEW FEEDLOT APPLICATION

Francis Dierickx gave a report from the Aitkin County Commissioners Board meeting that was held re: Potential New Feedlot Application. The Aitkin County Commissioners are in favor. The County does not have delegation authority, it goes through the MPCA. A manure management plan is in place—will be removed and put on farm fields. The Aitkin County Water Planning Task Force approved baseline water samples to be taken on the Mississippi River and Willow River.

MFA DUES/\$50

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Frank Turnock to pay MFA dues in the amount of \$50. Approved unanimously.

MICHELLE ERICKSON PROJECT

Discussion re: Michelle Erickson project. A motion was made by Francis Diericks and seconded by Frank Turnock at this time there is nothing in the proposal we can commit to—bring back an engineered plan and we would consider. Even with technical engineering the SWCD will not touch a structural issue. Approved unanimously.

APPAREL

A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Frank Turnock to approve \$25 each for Ellie Joing and Brian Roulett to purchase SWCD apparel. Approved unanimously.

KETTLE RIVER/UPPER ST. CROIX 1W1P/STATEMENT OF WORK (KNUTSON PROJECT)

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Frank Turnock to approve signing the Kettle River/Upper St. Croix 1W1P Statement of Work and accept the Knutson Shoreline Project (Pine Lake) \$3820. Approved unanimously.

FARM BILL BIOLOGIST-Laura

- IR forms
- Site visits for payment
- CD/CART training
- Pollinator Summit Webinar

- Wondering about Woodlands
- Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Workshop/Milaca
- Agronomy Tech Note #31 Training
- Working towards Prescribed Burn training certification

PROJECT PROPOSAL/PELKEY, LAKE MINNEWAWA/\$26,514 SECTION 319 GRANT

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Bob Janzen to approve the project proposal for Pelkey, Lake Minnewawa \$26,514 Section 319 Grant. Approved unanimously.

HILL CITY BUCKTHORN PROJECT/MISSISSIPPI GR 1W1P

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Francis Dierickx to approve the Hill City Buckthorn Project. Approved unanimously. Total estimate for the project \$7731, 75% of the project costs \$5778.91 funded through Mississippi GR 1W1P. Approved unanimously.

SWCD INTERN

The Aitkin County SWCD will not be getting a Conservation Corp. intern this summer. The Aitkin County SWCD is looking to hire a SWCD intern this summer (13 weeks @ \$20/hr. 40 hrs. a week). A hiring committee will be formed. A motion was made by Francis Dierickx and seconded by Frank Turnock to approve up to \$13,000 to hire a SWCD intern. Approved unanimously.

SOIL HEALTH SPECIALIST/OUTREACH SPECIALIST-Veronica

Soil Health

- Soil Health Peer Group-Hit the Ground Running/Next event this summer
- Pollinator Webinar Series
- Soil Health trainings on-line
- Cattlemen's Association meeting

Outreach

- Leadership Training
- Rivers & Lakes Fair upcoming meeting Thurs.

- Tree, Plant & Seed Sale (38 orders on line)
- Miss. Brd./Shoreline Water Quality tri-fold

Other

- Presented at Master Naturalist Program
- March Newsletter
- U of M presentation "Intro to Drones" course

AREA III RESOLUTIONS

Resolution meeting is June 6, 2025. Resolutions need to be in by May 10, 2025. Resolutions will be discussed at the next Aitkin County SWCD Board meeting.

It was suggested to have a presentation of Emerald Ash Borer by Kyle Fredrickson, Aitkin County Land Dept. at a SWCD Board meeting.

SNAKE RIVER REPORT-Dan

Election of Officers was held. Project review (shoreline and well sealing projects)

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT-Janet

- 1W1P's
- Big Sandy Watershed-319 Grant Federal Grant, Phase II work plan needs to be done now instead of July.
- Health Benefits (HSA is now complete and payments are starting to be taken out along with VEBA)
- Upcoming H/R training through MCIT to be held in St. Cloud in April.

SENIOR TECHNICIAN-Sam

- Riparian buffers
- Culvert Inventory update
- Soil Health
- Ag Inspector
- Forestry
- Rum River Partnership
- Logan Twp. Erosion Control

PROJECT COORDINATOR-Brian

- AIS Watercraft Inspection preparations for the upcoming season
- Working with Penmac to get needed # of inspectors and training scheduled, also necessary tools, equipment and apparel etc.
- Decontamination units more efficient plan on moving and use of them
- AIS Education Grants submitted and ready for approval at the April AIS meeting

Other

- Getting dept. vehicles in for maintenance and routine service for the upcoming season.
- Wrote an article for the SWCD March newsletter.
- Continued training and networking with other AIS professionals to gain knowledge of the AIS Inspector process.

CPL GRANT/BIG PINE LAKE FISH PASSAGE

A motion was made by Tom Fastland and seconded by Bob Janzen to accept and sign the CPL Grant, Big Pine Lake Fish Passage.

A motion was made by Frank Turnock and seconded by Francis Dierickx to authorize Brian to sign documents related to the CPL grant. Approved unanimously.

WATERSHED MGMT/WETLAND SPECIALIST REPORT-Ellie

- Shoreline visit
- Rum River Watershed (Mille Lacs Tech. Engineer Prioritization Study) letters sent out.
- Trainings
- Wetland TEP meeting
- BSALWMP, Water Plan meetings (took minutes)
- Rivers & Lakes Fair
- Rum River Watershed meeting in Milaca
- Trivia games with groups, great way to engage a group of people and break up a meeting

MN BWSR CONSERVATIONIST REPORT-Darren

- 2 new hires with BWSR
- Legislative Update session to end May 19, 2025

- BWSR Spring training 3/31/25
- G/R 1W1P work plant to be approved soon
- Roles of Conservation organizations to be held on-line by Darren

NRCS REPORT-Tom

- Conservation Program update
- CSP Assessment & Ranking Deadline March 21, 2025
- (2) conservation practices certified in the last month
- New ABC forester
- Bird Flu details (2 NRCS staff from Aitkin will be detailed Tom & Jace)
- Local Work Group meeting to be scheduled in April

TSA 3 REPORT-Tom

-Meeting will be held next Wednesday, March 26, 2025.

The next Aitkin County SWCD Board of Supervisors meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at the Aitkin County Government Center.

A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Francis Dierickx to adjourn at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Turnock
Secretary