



## **Root River Soil and Water Conservation District**

Agricultural Service Center

805 N. Hwy. 44/76, Suite 1

Caledonia, MN 55921

**(507) 724-5261 Ext. 3**

<https://www.co.houston.mn.us/departments/soil-and-water/>

### **MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD**

January 9, 2025

The Root River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on January 9, 2025 at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota for its regular meeting.

The meeting was called to order by District Manager, Walter at 1:01 p.m.

#### **Members Present:**

Ken Anderson  
Joe Driscoll  
Matt Feldmeier  
Glenn Kruse  
Jerry Welke

#### **Members Not Present:**

#### **Others:**

Dave Walter, Dan Wermager and Janice Messner– SWCD staff; Bob Scanlan, MN Department of Agriculture

Those present took part in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Officers & Appointments**

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving Kenneth Anderson as the 2025 Chair, Matt Feldmeier Vice-Chair, Secretary Joe Driscoll, Treasurer Jerry Welke and Reporter Glenn Kruse.

Voting affirmative: Anderson, Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke                      Opposed: None                      Motion carried.

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving the following Committee Appointments for 2025:

**Finance Committee:** Welke & Driscoll

**Personnel Committee:** Feldmeier & Kruse

**TSA7 Committee:** Welke

**Root River One Watershed, One Plan:** Kruse *Alternate:* Feldmeier

**Mississippi River – Winona/La Crescent One Watershed, One Plan:** Welke *Alternate:* Driscoll

**Bear Creek:** Anderson

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke                      Opposed: None                      Motion carried.

Bob Scanlan with the MN Department of Agriculture reviewed a proposed work plan, joint powers agreement and budget with the board for the Spring Grove Township Walkover proposal. Discussion regarding the proposed budget followed. Scanlan will attempt to obtain additional funding for the project and report back at the February board meeting.

**Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the monthly Root River SWCD board meetings to be held on the second Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. May – October and 1:00 p.m. November – April at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke                      Opposed: None                      Motion carried.

**Minutes:** **Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving the minutes from the December 12, 2024 board meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke                      Opposed: None                      Motion carried.

**Employee Time Records:** Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the Employee Time Records.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Monthly Report:** Welke recommended the December 2024 treasurer's report be placed on file for audit.

Motion by Kruse, seconded by Welke, approving the financial responsibilities as follows:

Houston County Treasurer/Auditor – depository for all district funds and WinLaC IWIP funds

Merchants Bank – as the general checking account

Eitzen State Bank – investment designated reserve, cost share

MCIT – Bonding & Insurance Liability, Property, and Workman's Compensation insurance

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Agency Reports:**

**Ryan Hytry, District Conservationist NRCS Report – No report.**

**Dave Walter, District Manager Report**

- Walter stated the 2025 Envirothon will be held May 6, 2025 at the Sportsman Club in Byron, MN. Supervisors were asked if they would be interested in judging the oral presentation at this year's event. Welke said he would unless someone else would be interested.
- SE Regional Groundwater Protection and Soil Health Initiative – Walter indicated he has been participating in planning meetings to formulate a bill to be presented to the state legislator for cover crop funding out of the State's general budget. He explained a few of the characteristics including tiered fund based payments which is based on height of the cover crop plant. Walter will keep the board informed as progress is made.
- A discussion was held regarding the broadcast seeder and trailer that the district purchased. It was mutually decided to move forward with selling this equipment. Wermager contacted a landowner that has expressed interest in purchasing the seeder and Walter stated he may know of another individual that may be interested in the seeder. A brief discussion on the selling price for the seeder followed. The board would like to get \$5,000 for the seeder and would not like to go any lower than \$3,500.00. Driscoll indicated he may know of someone interested in the trailer. No additional discussion on the price followed.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:**

**Dave Walter, District Manager**

- WCA – Walter stated he looked at a water crossing and driveway project and has received a request for a wetland determination on a solar field in Caledonia Township.
- AIS – No report

**MASWCD & MACDE**

Walter shared the MASWCD Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capital will be held March 4 – 5, 2025.

**WATERSHED UPDATES**

***Crooked Creek*** – Walter shared debris that was removed from the Klinski structure will need to be burned, fencing around the R-4 structure needs to be removed and brush management maintenance is needed.

***Bear Creek*** – No report.

***Winnebago*** – No report.

***Root River IWIP*** – No report.

*WinLaC 1W1P* – No report.

**PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:**

**Jean Meiners, Technician**

- **Buffer Law** – Walter reported he is doing the county's area spot checks and is towards the end of the checks. BuffCat updates will follow.
- **MDA Private Well Mitigation (RO Systems)** – No report.
- **MDH Safe Drinking Water Tap-In** – No report.
- **BMP Projects** – Walter stated Meiners has been doing design work this past month.

**Janice Messner, Administrative Assistant**

- **Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network** – No report.
- **Trees** – Messner reviewed the monthly update report and reported half of the pre-ordered trees have been sold.

**Dan Wermager, Technician**

- **Alliance Grant** – Wermager shared the next sign-up period has started and he will be accepting applications until February 11, 2025. He stated he has started calling those that have expressed interest. He also reported he is doing before and after soil loss numbers on the projects from the first round of approvals.
- **Local Capacity County Match CWMA** – No report.
- **Project Development – Root River 1W1P** – No report.
- **HELP Grant** – Wermager indicated the final reporting was completed and submitted.
- **I-90 Soil Health Tour** – Wermager stated this year's event will be held February 7, 2025 at the Hokah Fire Station from 10:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m.

**Houston County Water Plan** – Wermager shared the last scheduled meeting will be February 6, 2025. The action item will be the dissolution of the committee.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCIAL COMMITTEE:** No report.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:** No report.

**TSA7 (Joint Powers) COMMITTEE:** Walter stated the next meeting will be January 22, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. at the Olmsted SWCD in Rochester, MN.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Walter reported his findings on purchasing a new district truck. **Motion** by Driscoll, seconded by Welke, approving the purchase of a 2025 GMC 1500 Double Pro V8 truck for \$41,578.90 through North County GM Quotation Contract #199799.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Walter indicated the Blue Book value of our 2017 GMC Sierra is between \$15,200 and \$15,800.00.

### **NEW BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS**

**Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Feldmeier, approving the 2025 Supervisor Per Diem of \$125.00 per meeting/day.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the FY25 MASWCD Dues of \$7,431.37.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Motion** by Welke, seconded by Driscoll, approving an audit bid from Peterson Company Ltd in the amount of \$5,000 for the district and \$600 for WinLaC 1W1P for the 2024 Year-End Financial audit.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, approving the 2025 Crooked Creek Watershed District Agreement for Services in the amount of \$19,000.00.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

### **COST SHARE PROGRAMS**

**1W1P ROOT RIVER WATERSHED-BASE IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING PROGRAM** (*Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source*)

FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share (*Grant expiration 12/31/2026*) Available Funds **\$89,241.48**

FY24 Root River 1W1P Feedlot Cost Share (*Grant expiration 12/31/2026*) Available Funds **\$ 5,934.19**

#### **FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Payment Request**

Name	Project/Contract #	Total Cost Estimate	Actual Project Cost	Request
Sylling, Myron	#18FY24RR1W1P Cover Crop	\$28,200.00	\$28,200.00	235 acres @ \$40/acre @ 3 yrs. = \$28,200.00 <b>Payment Amount Approved = \$28,200.00</b>

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving payment for Contract #18FY24RR1W1P Sylling, Myron in the amount of \$28,200.00 for a three year, 235 acre single specie cover crop project. Funding Source FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

#### **FY24 Root River 1W1P Feedlot Cost Share Payment Request Contingent Upon Signatures & Additional Bills**

Name	Project/Contract #	Total Cost Estimate	Actual Project Cost	Request
Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC	#08FY24RR1W1P Roofs & Covers	\$79,027.88	\$67,095.30	$\$67,095.30 \times 90\% = \$60,385.77$ <b>Payment Amount Approved = \$60,385.77</b> <i>Slippage for Re-Allocation \$18,642.11</i>

**Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Welke, approving payment for Contract #08FY24RR1W1P Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC in the amount of \$60,385.77 for a roofs and covers project and re-allocating slippage in the amount of \$18,642.11. The approval is with the contingency that the dollar amounts are subject to change upon adding additional engineering bills and obtaining technical and administrative signatures. Funding Source FY24 Root River 1W1P Feedlot Cost Share.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Abstained: Feldmeier

Motion carried.

#### **FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Expired Contract Acknowledgement**

It was acknowledged Contract #06FY24RR1W1P Diersen, John Heavy Use Area Protection (561) expired 12/15/24. Cost share funds totaling \$13,978.80 will be re-allocated to FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Grant.

Supervisor Anderson shared information from the Feedlot Producer Workshop he attended on January 8, 2025.

**ARPA – (Spending expiration 12/31/2026) Available Funds \$ 27,539.62**

**LOCAL CAPACITY STATE COST SHARE PROGRAM (Funding up to 75% of cost estimate or 90% if combined with other non-state funding source)**

FY21 Local Capacity County Appropriation (2020) Cost Share – Available Funds \$0.00

FY22 Local Capacity County Appropriation (2021) Cost Share – Available Funds \$0.00

**WINLAC 1W1P COST SHARE PROGRAM (Funding percentage based on ranking)**

FY23 WinLaC 1W1P Ag Practices Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2025) Available Funds \$7,000.00

FY23 WinLaC 1W1P Non-Structural Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2025) Available Funds \$5,000.00

FY23 WinLaC 1W1P Vegetative & Pollinator Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2025) Available Funds \$5,000.00

**\*\*\*Accounts Payable:\*\*\***

Voucher #	Item	Amount
4990	Ron Carlsen – Rent – January	\$ 1,287.00
4991	Kwik Trip – Fuel – SWCD Trucks	\$ 220.77
4992	MN Counties Intergovernmental Trust – Workers Comp = \$3,366.00; Liability Ins = \$3,493.00	\$ 6,859.00
4993	MASWCD – FY25 Dues	\$ 7,431.37
4994	Minnesota Revenue – 2024 Sales & Use Tax	\$ 768.00
4995	Sylling, Myron - #18FY24RR1W1P – Cover Crop	\$ 28,200.00
4996	IA DNR State Forest Nursery - Trees	\$ 325.00
4997	Quill LLC – Office Supplies	\$ 144.25
	Heintz Badger Valley Farms LLC - #08FY24RR1W1P – Roofs & Covers	\$
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 45,235.39</b>
	Transfer of Funds from Cash General Fund to Bear Creek Watershed Investment Acct. 10033399	\$ 1,000.00
	Transfer of Funds from Cash General Fund to Winnebago Watershed Investment Acct. 10033340	\$ 1,000.00

**Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving payment of the above listed accounts payable and transfer of funds.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**\*\*\* WinLaC 1W1P Accounts Payable \*\*\***

Voucher #	Item	Amount
	Root River SWCD – Technical – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$284.30; Admin – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$3,047.76; WinLaC CRP Root River SWCD – Admin – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$29.88	\$ 3,361.94
23	Fillmore SWCD – Technical – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024	\$ 9,158.89
24	Winona County – Admin – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024	\$ 4,976.13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 17,496.96</b>

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the above listed WinLaC 1W1P accounts payable.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Supervisor Feldmeier suggested an invitation be extended to Jeremy Burt, Houston County Environmental Specialist to attend our meeting, introduce himself and share updates.

**Motion** by Kruse, seconded by Welke, adjourning the meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

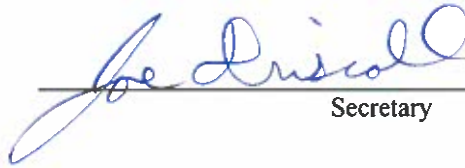
Meeting adjourned.

**NEXT MEETING -- Regular Meeting, February 13, 2025, 1:00 p.m. Ag Service Center**

Approved:

2-13-25

Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Driscoll", is written over a horizontal line.

Secretary



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### **MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD**

**February 13, 2025**

The Root River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on February 13, 2025 at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota for its regular meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Anderson at 1:00 p.m.

#### **Members Present:**

Ken Anderson

Joe Driscoll

Matt Feldmeier

Glenn Kruse

Jerry Welke

#### **Members Not Present:**

#### **Others:**

Dave Walter and Janice Messner– SWCD staff; Ryan Hytry, NRCS staff; Bob Scanlan, MN Department of Agriculture; Jeremy Burt, Houston County Environmental Specialist.

Those present took part in the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions followed.

Houston County Environmental Specialist, Jeremy Burt, informed the board he is conducting feedlot inspections and is working on feedlot registrations. Registrations are required every four years. Burt fielded questions from both the board and others at the meeting.

Bob Scanlan with the MN Department of Agriculture reviewed the proposed budget and timeline for the Spring Grove Township Walkover proposal. He will be moving forward to obtain state signatures on the Joint Powers Agreement and will present it to the board in the near future for approval.

**Minutes:** Motion by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, approving the minutes from the January 9, 2025 board meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Employee Time Records:** Motion by Kruse, seconded by Driscoll, approving the Employee Time Records.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Monthly Report:** Welke recommended the January 2024 treasurer's report be placed on file for audit.

#### **Agency Reports:**

##### **Ryan Hytry, District Conservationist NRCS Report**

- Hytry reported they have recently made payments for a brush management project and a grazing project. He shared the Inflation Reduction Act funding has been paused by the Trump administration. This effects eight projects. There are 15 – 20 EQIP applications being approved using funding from the General Farm Bill. These projects will be moving forward.



**Dave Walter, District Manager Report**

- Walter stated he and Welke will be assisting with the 2025 Envirothon being held May 6, 2025 at the Sportsman Club in Byron, MN.
- SE Regional Groundwater Protection and Soil Health Initiative – Walter indicated a bill is being formulated to be presented to the state legislator for cover crop funding out of the State's general budget or possibly Clean Water Legacy funds.
- FY25 Soil Health Practices Grant (RCPP) – Walter shared this grant funding is similar to the Climate Smart Alliance Grant. The proposal is for \$120,000 in cost share assistances and \$20,000 for technical assistances. There are no administrative dollars tied to the grant. Admin time can be used as match. The current proposal allows us to say yes or no to the grant or opt in at a later date. Walter stated he would prefer to opt in at a later date since the Alliance Grant funds are currently available for landowners. It was acknowledged by all members of the board to opt in at a later date.
- Walter shared Nitrogen Management in SE MN seminar is being offered March 13, 2025 at the Olmsted County Fairgrounds in Rochester, MN. He is planning to attend.

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Kruse, changing the March board meeting date to Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

- Walter stated the utility trailer has been sold. The broadcast seeder is being stored at his residence. He stated there may be three parties interested in purchasing it. The board would like to get \$5,000 for the seeder and would not like to go any lower than \$3,500.00.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:****Dave Walter, District Manager**

- **WCA** – Walter stated he is participating in trainings addressing the Ag exemption changes to the Wetland Conservation Act.
- **AIS** – No report

**MASWCD & MACDE**

Walter shared the MASWCD Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capital will be held March 4 – 5, 2025.

Walter indicated the SE MACDE Spring Meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2025 in Harmony, MN. Registration fee is \$20/staff member. **Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving the registration fee for any staff member interested in attending.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**WATERSHED UPDATES**

***Crooked Creek*** – No report.

***Bear Creek*** – Walter stated work is needed on the spillway at the Patterson site. The landowner has not been enthusiastic about the needed work.

***Winnebago*** – No report.

***Root River IWIP*** – Walter indicated a Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 24, 2025.

***WinLaC IWIP*** – Welke shared a Policy Committee meeting was held February 10, 2025. Election of officers, day-to-day lead and fiscal agent were all acted on. Jen Wahls did a report on forestry. Messner added work plan changes have been made shifting funds to various activities and shared Root River SWCD cost share funding had been reduced to assist with other grant expenditures. She also shared the 2024 WinLaC Accomplishments put together by Green Corp member Mary Gegen. Messner also shared the City of La Crescent is interested in installing a bio-retention basin on South Sixth Street and is requesting WinLaC urban stormwater funding. She stated an application will likely come to the board for consideration at the next board meeting.



**PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:**

**Jean Meiners, Technician**

- **Buffer Law** – Walter reported he has started working on the buffer mapping.
- **MDA Private Well Mitigation (RO Systems)** – No report.
- **MDH Safe Drinking Water Tap-In** – No report.
- **MDH Well Inventory** – Walter shared the SWCD has been approached to participate in the MDH Well Inventory project. There are approximately 300 uninventoried wells in the county. The proposal is to have SWCD staff contact landowners and to make record of the well's location and any information that can be gathered about the well and offer cost share assistance for sealing the wells.
- **BMP Projects** – Walter stated Meiners has been doing engineering work this past month.
- **EPA Update** – Messner shared she and Meiners participated in an EPA update meeting. Messner shared data on the number of RO systems that have been installed to date and applications received in the eight county focal area.

**Janice Messner, Administrative Assistant**

- **Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network** – No report.
- **Trees** – Messner reviewed the monthly update report and reported some pre-ordered trees are sold out but more are available through our vendors.
- **2023 Year-End Financial Statement** – Messner did a short presentation of the 2023 Year-End Financial Statement.

**Dan Wermager, Technician**

- **Alliance Grant** – Walter stated the current sign-up period ends February 14, 2025. Meiners and Glaunert are helping upload applications. He also reported the Alliance Grant funds are currently froze.
- **Local Capacity County Match CWMA** – No report.
- **Project Development – Root River 1W1P** – No report.
- **I-90 Soil Health Tour** – Walter reported Welke, Driscoll and Anderson were all in attendance and they had good speakers. Approximately 20 including agency partners were in attendance.

**Houston County Water Plan** – Walter shared at the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting the committee was dissolved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCIAL COMMITTEE:** No report.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:** Walter reviewed all proposed Personnel Policy changes. **Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving all changes as presented with the exception of smoking, chewing, and vaping in District vehicles. It was moved to state No smoking, chewing or vaping is permitted in District vehicles.  
 Voting affirmative: Anderson, Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke      Opposed: None      Motion carried.

**TSA7 (Joint Powers) COMMITTEE:** Walter stated the TSA7 meeting was held January 22, 2025 at the Olmsted SWCD in Rochester, MN. The budget and audit were discussed.

**OLD BUSINESS** – No report.

**\*\*\*Accounts Payable:\*\*\***

Voucher #	Item	Amount
4999	Ron Carlsen – Rent – February	\$ 1,287.00
5000	Kwik Trip – Fuel – SWCD Trucks	\$ 177.32
5001	SE SWCD Technical Support JPB – Annual Membership Dues 2025	\$ 4,000.00
5002	Goodhue SWCD – Envirothon Dues 2025	\$ 175.00
5003	IA DNR State Forest Nursery - Trees	\$ 207.50
5004	SE MACDE – MACDE Dues = \$40.00 & Registration Spring Meeting = \$40.00	\$ 80.00
5005	VISA – RR1W1P Civic Engagement Event 2/7/25 = \$392.16; Annual Fee = \$25.00; Meal RCPP mtg. 2/11/25 = \$12.70	\$ 429.86
5006	Lodholz North Star Acres, Inc. – Trees – 25% Down Payment	\$ 13.19
		\$
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,369.87</b>

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving payment of the above listed accounts payable.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**\*\*\* WinLaC 1W1P Accounts Payable \*\*\***

Voucher #	Item	Amount
25	Wabasha SWCD – Technical 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$11,951.51; Project Development 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$607.25; Projects Non-Structural = \$7,825.00	\$ 20,383.76
26	Olmsted SWCD – Project Development 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$167.12; Education = \$108.72; Technical 3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$4,111.28 & 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2024 = \$8,737.63	\$ 13,124.75
27	SE MN Technical Support JPB – Technical 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr.	\$ 1,540.74
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 35,049.25</b>

**Motion** by Welke, seconded by Feldmeier, approving the above listed WinLaC 1W1P accounts payable.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

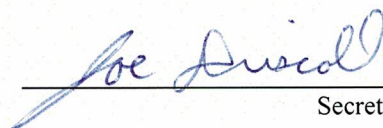
Walter reported a 2025 GMC pick-up was ordered with delivery in May. He also reported tips are reimbursable along with meal expenses.

Chair Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

Meeting adjourned.

**NEXT MEETING -- Regular Meeting, March 12, 2025, 1:00 p.m. Ag Service Center**

Approved: 3-12-25  
Date

  
Secretary





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### **MINUTES OF THE ROOT RIVER SWCD**

March 12, 2025

The Root River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on March 12, 2025 at the Ag Service Center in Caledonia, Minnesota for its regular meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Anderson at 1:00 p.m.

#### **Members Present:**

Ken Anderson

Joe Driscoll

Matt Feldmeier

Jerry Welke

#### **Members Not Present:**

Glenn Kruse

#### **Others:**

Dave Walter, Dan Wermager, Jean Meiners and Janice Messner– SWCD staff; Ryan Hytry, NRCS staff; Bob Scanlan, MN Department of Agriculture.

Those present took part in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bob Scanlan with the MN Department of Agriculture reviewed the proposed budget and timeline for the Spring Grove Township Walkover proposal. **Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Welke, approving a Joint Powers Agreement between MN Dept. of Ag and Root River SWCD (*Spring Grove Township Walkover*) in the amount of \$135,000.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Minutes:** **Motion** by Driscoll, seconded by Welke, approving the minutes from the February 13, 2025 board meeting.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Employee Time Records and Supervisor Per Diems:** **Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving the Employee Time Records and Supervisor Per Diems.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Monthly Report:** Welke recommended the February 2024 treasurer's report be placed on file for audit.

#### **Agency Reports:**

##### **Ryan Hytry, District Conservationist NRCS Report**

- Hytry indicated a date needs to be set prior to June for the Locally Led Conservation Work Group meeting. After discussing options it was mutually agreed upon to hold the meeting April 10, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
- Hytry reported the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding continues to be paused. This effects five or six new project applications. Funding for completed IRA projects are being paid.

Hytry exited the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

**Dave Walter, District Manager Report**

- Walter shared Nitrogen Management in SE MN seminar is being offered March 13, 2025 at the Olmsted County Fairgrounds in Rochester, MN. He, Driscoll, Welke, Connor McCormick and Bob Scanlan will be attending.
- Walter reported the broadcast seeder is still for sale.
- Walter stated he would like to get Microsoft 365 and ARC Pro added to the computer he is using. He reported his computer crashed in the end of 2024 and is using a computer from a partner agency. Messner asked about having virus protection for all the district computers. Anderson requested pricing be put together and brought back to the board to be reviewed.
- Walter announced this year's BWSR Tour scheduled for July will bring them to our area. He would like to feature the Schaffer project and the Klinski project. The Cattlemen's Association will be grilling for the event.
- Walter indicated 70 SWCDs applied for the FY25 Soil Health Practices Grant (RCPP) funding. At a manager's meeting held March 11<sup>th</sup> there was interest in setting a standardized rate for practices across the counties for this grant. There were various ideas of what the standardization should be. They will continue to work towards finding common ground for a standardized rate. Walter shared this grant is NRCS funded and it is hoped that the funding will be available in the end of March 2025.
- Scanlan addressed a question regarding a lawsuit against MN Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) and MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). An environmental group is suing MDA and MPCA for the lack of progress being made to address the high nitrates in SE Minnesota.
- Walter shared information regarding a Notice of Preliminary Permit Application Accepted for Filing and Soliciting Comments, Motions to Intervene, and Competing Applications. The preliminary permit will allow for proposing to study the feasibility of the proposed Mississippi Lock and Dam 8 Hydroelectric Project. The project is located at the US Army Corp of Engineers' Mississippi Lock and Dam 8 in Vernon County, Wisconsin and Houston County, Minnesota. The proposed project would consist of a 275 ft. long, 220 ft. wide intake area located upstream of the powerhouse; a 220 ft. long and 95 ft. wide powerhouse located adjacent to the eastern side of the existing Corp dam; ten 0.875 megawatt (MW) horizontal propeller turbine generators; new power pole and substation constructed on a raised platform; single overhead three-phase 69 kilovolt line to the interconnection point; concrete guide walls constructed at the powerhouse tailrace and appurtenant facilities.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:****Dave Walter, District Manager**

- WCA – No report.
- AIS – No report.

**MASWCD & MACDE** – No report.**WATERSHED UPDATES**

*Crooked Creek* – No report.

*Bear Creek* – No report.

*Winnebago* – No report.

*Root River IWIP* – Wermager indicated the Policy Committee met on Monday, February 24, 2025. Officers were elected and available funding was discussed. FY22/23 grant has \$91,000 left and of the \$2.3 million of the FY24 grant approximately \$250,000 has been spent.

*WinLaC IWIP* – No report.



**PROGRAM & STAFF REPORTS:**

**Jean Meiners, Technician**

- **Buffer Law** – Meiners reported letters for spot checking are currently being mailed and spot checks will begin on Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>.
- **MDA Private Well Mitigation (RO Systems)** – Meiners shared she has reached out to the landowners that had high nitrates reported from the Houston County Township Testing. Of the eight contacted seven are interested in the free RO system.
- **MDH Safe Drinking Water Tap-In** – Meiners indicated the cost share project that we are funding with grant dollars started on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. She was on-site to photo document the project.
- **MDH Well Inventory** – Meiners shared she put together a work plan and is waiting for it to be reviewed in-house before submitting it.
- **BMP Projects** – Meiners informed the board she recently surveyed two grade stabilization structure sites.

**Janice Messner, Administrative Assistant**

- **Volunteer Nitrate Monitoring Network** – No report.
- **Trees** – Messner reviewed the monthly update report and reported an order reduction was made at the end of February for three tree species. She also reported sales are down from where we were last year at this time.

**Dan Wermager, Technician**

- **Alliance Grant** – Wermager reported there were approximately 80 applications plus an additional ten nutrient management applications for the sign-up period that ended February 14, 2025. He stated federal funding is still froze for projects, but state funding is available allowing him to continue working on reporting for the new applications from the February sign-up.
- **Local Capacity County Match CWMA** – Wermager stated he did a check out on the final project with this funding.
- **Project Development – Root River 1W1P** – No report.
- **Great Lakes Cover Crop Project** – Wermager indicated this project is being offered through MN Dept. of Ag. It consists of measuring nutrients and biomass on cover cropped fields, taking clippings of the cover crops and photos of 11 fields.

Scanlan exited the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCIAL COMMITTEE:** No report.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:** Walter reviewed an additional proposed Personnel Policy change regarding overtime. **Motion** by Driscoll, seconded by Feldmeier, approving the additional change as presented.

Voting affirmative: Anderson, Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**TSA7 (Joint Powers) COMMITTEE:** No report.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Anderson inquired about the new pickup delivery. Walter stated it is scheduled to arrive in May. Walter indicated the Blue Book value of the GMC is approximately \$15,000 and he believes he has a buyer.

**NEW BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS**

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving the Joint Powers Agreement between MN Dept. of Ag and Root River SWCD in the amount of \$135,000 for technical, administrative and outreach services associated with Spring Grove Twp. walkover projects.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Motion** by Driscoll, seconded by Welke, approving signing authority for Dave Walter on cost share applications and amendment requests with the condition of discussing each authorization with the board chair or vice chair prior to the authorization. The signing authority is effective through December 31, 2025.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Motion** by Welke, seconded by Driscoll, approving the SE MASWCD Area 7 2025 Annual Dues in the amount of \$300.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**COST SHARE PROGRAMS**

**1W1P ROOT RIVER WATERSHED-BASE IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING PROGRAM** *(Funding up to 90% of cost estimate with or without other non-state funding source)*

FY22/23 Root River 1W1P Cost Share *(Grant expiration 12/31/2025)* Available Funds **\$2,512.50**

FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share *(Grant expiration 12/31/2026)* Available Funds **\$103,220.28**

**FY22/23 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Request**

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
Peterson, Jason	31FY22/23RR1W1P	\$3,350.00	\$2,512.50	351 - Well Decommissioning	9/1/25

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving a cost share request for contract #31FY22/23RR1W1P Peterson, Jason for Well Decommissioning (351) in the amount of \$2,512.00 (75% cost share rate). Funding source: FY 22/23 Root River 1W1P Cost Share.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**FY24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share Request**

Name	Contract	Total Cost Estimate	Cost Share Amount Requested	Project	Completion Date
RLM Family Limited Partnership	20FY24RR1W1P	\$11,650.00	\$10,485.00	410 – Grade Stabilization Structure	10/1/25

**Motion** by Feldmeier, seconded by Driscoll, approving a cost share request for contract #20FY24RR1W1P RLM Family Limited Partnership for a Grade Stabilization Structure (410) in the amount of \$10,485.00. Funding source: FY 24 Root River 1W1P Cost Share.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**LOCAL CAPACITY STATE COST SHARE PROGRAM** *(Funding up to 75% of cost estimate or 90% if combined with other non-state funding source)*

FY21 Local Capacity County Appropriation (2020) Cost Share – Available Funds **\$0.00**

FY22 Local Capacity County Appropriation (2021) Cost Share – Available Funds **\$0.00**

**FY21 & FY22 Local Capacity County Appropriation Cost Share Payment Request**

Name	Project/Contract #	Total Cost Estimate	Actual Project Cost	Request
Craig, Tim	#12-20CM CWMA Brush Management	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	6.66667 acres @ \$300/acre = \$2,000.00 <b>Payment Amount Approved = \$2,000.00 (FY21)</b>



				LC County Appropriation = \$550.00 & FY22 LC County Appropriation = \$1,450.00
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**Motion** by Driscoll, seconded by Welke, approving payment for Contract #12-20CM CWMA Craig, Tim in the amount of \$2,000.00 for a brush management project. Funding Source FY21 LC County Appropriation = \$550.00 & FY22 LC County Appropriation = \$1,450.00.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier, Kruse and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**ARPA** – (Spending expiration 12/31/2026) Available Funds \$ 27,539.62

Walter requested to keep a portion of the available funds for push-up pond projects. The board mutually agreed upon this request.

**WINLAC 1W1P COST SHARE PROGRAM** (Funding percentage based on ranking)

FY23 WinLaC 1W1P Ag Practices Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2025) Available Funds \$7,000.00

FY23 WinLaC 1W1P Non-Structural Cost Share (Grant expiration 12/31/2025) Available Funds \$5,000.00

**\*\*\*Accounts Payable:\*\*\***

Voucher #	Item	Amount
5007	Ron Carlsen – Rent – March	\$ 1,287.00
5008	Kwik Trip – Fuel – SWCD Trucks	\$ 179.38
5009	Talcott Resolution Life & Annuity Ins. Co. – Life Insurance – Policy #LU1188704 Dave Walter	\$ 90.00
5010	Anderson, Ken – Mileage – 1st Qtr.	\$ 81.20
5011	Driscoll, Joe – Mileage – 1st Qtr.	\$ 67.55
5012	Feldmeier, Matt – Mileage – 1st Qtr.	\$ 75.60
5013	Kruse, Glenn – Mileage – 1st Qtr.	\$ 28.00
5014	Welke, Jerry – Mileage – 1st Qtr.	\$ 120.40
5015	IA DNR State Forest Nursery - Trees	\$ 162.50
5016	VISA – Meal = \$42.15; WinLaC Chloride Postage = \$35.99; WinLaC Chloride Field Supply = \$1.39; Postage = \$73.00	\$ 152.53
5017	Minnesota State Auditor – 2023 Year End Audit	\$ 248.00
5018	Craig, Tim - #12-20CM CWMA – Brush Management	\$ 2,000.00
5019	SE MASWCD – Area 7 MASWCD – 2025 Annual Dues	\$ 300.00
5020	Lodholz North Star Acres, Inc – Trees	\$ 26.37
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,745.53</b>

**Motion** by Welke, seconded by Driscoll, approving payment of the above listed accounts payable.

Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

**Motion** by Welke, seconded by Feldmeier, to adjourn the meeting.

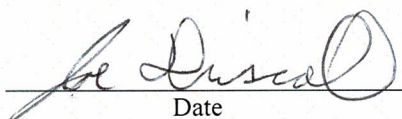
Voting affirmative: Driscoll, Feldmeier and Welke

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING -- Regular Meeting, April 10, 2025, 1:00 p.m.** Ag Service Center

Approved:   
Date

4-10-2025

Secretary