



North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792

Regular Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2024

The meeting was held in person at the District office. A virtual link was available.

Supervisors Present at Roll Call: Chuck Bainter, Frank Modich, Mark Peterson and Gary Rantala were present in-person. Peggy Pearson was online for medical reasons.

Staff Present: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator; Becca Reiss, Community Conservationist; Kaela Natwora, Watershed Conservationist; Jon Utecht, AIS Program Coordinator; Miranda Frenning, Accounting & Human Resources Specialist; Tristan Nelson, District Forester and Zach Evans, Regional Farm Bill Forester were present in-person. John McCormick, Regional Farm Bill Forester joined virtually.

Others Present: Melanie Bomier, BWSR Board Conservationist was present in person. Jake Janski, Area 3 President; and Todd Whitesel, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service joined via zoom.

Due to technical difficulties, the meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by Vice Chair, Gary Rantala.

1. Agenda - Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the agenda. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
2. Minutes of Last Meeting – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve the minutes. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to accept the financial reports and program summary. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
4. Accounts Receivable and Payable – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated 2/14/24. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
5. Guest Introductions and Comments –
 - a. Kaela Natwora, Watershed Conservationist for the St. Louis River. Kaela introduced herself and gave a description of her education and work history.
 - b. Melanie Bomier introduced herself as the new Board Conservationist at BWSR.
 - c. Jake Janski introduced himself as the president of the Area 3 SWCD Association. He is simply attending SWCD board meetings to learn more. He welcomes and encourages participation.

NEW BUSINESS

6. BWSR

- a. Cooperative Weed Management Area Application & Board Resolution 2024-03 – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2024-03. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- b. Rainy Headwaters Vermilion Watershed Plan & MOA & Board Resolution 2024-04. Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve Board Resolution 2024-04 with thanks to Anita and Becca. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- c. RIM Easement Master Joint Powers Agreement 2024-2029 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the RIM Easement Master Agreement. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- d. St. Louis River Adopt-A-Drain Program Membership Agreement – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the St. Louis River Adopt-A-Drain Membership

- Agreement. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
- e. St. Louis River Screenvision Media purchase ads at movie theaters – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve the contract with Screenvision Media. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
 7. Billable Rate 2024 – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to approve the 2024 billable rates. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
 8. Cost Share Rates – Watershed Based Implementation Funding
 - a. Forest Stewardship Plans – Moved by Mark Peterson/Frank Modich to approve cost share, up to the MN DNR Cost Share rates, for woodland stewardship plans contingent upon enrolling in the Sustainable Forests Incentives Act within one year and implementing at last one project within 5 years. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Staff will explore what options may be available to landowners whose lands are already enrolled in SFIA.

- b. Stormwater Plans – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve paying up to 95% of the cost of a stormwater management plan with the ability of the board to approve paying 100% if special circumstances exist. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
9. Resolution Development, if any – The board considered possible resolutions to develop.
10. Staffing
 - a. Job Approval Authority – Phil Norvitch
 - b. Wage Adjustment for Phil Norvitch effective 2/22/24- Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to approve a 4% increase to wages effective February 22. Phil was commended for his fantastic 8-year service to the District. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.
11. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Policy Committee – Rainy/Vermilion – March 1
 - b. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development Annual Mtg – March 8
 - c. MASWCD Day at the Capitol – March 12 & 13
 - d. Other

REPORTS – See packet

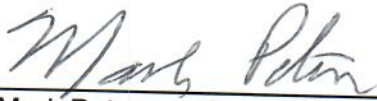
12. District Administrator Report – Anita
 - a. TSA Quarterly Hours Contributed – 4Q23
 13. Accounting & Human Resources Specialist – Miranda
 14. Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator Report – Jon
 - a. 2023 Watercraft Inspection Season Summary
 15. Community Conservationist Report- Becca
 16. District Forester Report – Tristan
 17. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – John
 18. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – Zach
- Frank Modich left at 12:26 p.m.
19. Resource Conservationist Report – Phil
 20. St. Louis River Watershed Conservationist Report – Kaela
 21. NRCS District Conservationist Report
 22. Supervisor & Committee Reports –
 - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – January 22 – Chuck indicated they are still looking for a 30-acre site to plant trees.

- b. Public Hearing & Policy Committee Rainy/Vermilion – January 26 – Chuck indicated that Becca did a marvelous job at the public hearing and throughout the whole process. The policy committee recommended each board approve, adopt and submit the plan to BWSR for approval.
- c. SWCD Forestry Association – January 18 – Mark indicated dues have gone up from \$60 to \$265 to allow for purchasing services from SWCDs. The treasurer/member support contract with us was approved. Aitkin will be coming forth with a contract for audio/visual support and taking/writing minutes. Aitkin County has lake management plans.
- d. Technical Service Area III – January 24 – Gary indicated he was unable to attend due to technical issues.

CLOSING

22. Next Meeting Date – The next meeting was set for Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. to allow participation at MASWCD Legislative Day on March 12 & 13.

- a. Adjourn – Moved by Mark Peterson/Chuck Bainter to adjourn the meeting at 12:48 a.m. Motion carried. Ayes: Bainter, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala. Nays: None. Motion carried.



Mark Peterson, Secretary
March 20, 2024



Resolution 2024-03

**North St. Louis
Soil and Water Conservation District**

505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 749-2000
www.nslswcd.org

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources announced a grant round help organizations develop and run a weed management organization, and

WHEREAS, the District staff plan to develop and submit a proposal that would meet those requirements; and

WHEREAS, this would partially consist of organizing an annual partner meeting, hosting two public workshops on identifying and managing invasive species, and update weed inventories and treating 60 acres of priority lands; and

WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board desires to accept this funding, if awarded.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors authorizes the staff to apply for and the District Administrator or Board Chair to secure and sign all documents related to any such award.

Motion Made by: Peterson
Seconded by: Modich

Affirmative: Bander, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala

Opposed: none

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the North St Louis SWCD Board on the 14th day of February 2024 and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.

Mark Peterson, Board Secretary

February 14, 2024



**North St. Louis
Soil and Water Conservation District**

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Whereas the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is a member of the Rainy Headwaters - Vermilion Watershed Planning Policy Committee; and

Whereas the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District has been an active participant in the development of the Rainy Headwaters - Vermilion Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan); and

Whereas all partners must also adopt the Plan to serve as a substitute for either the SWCD comprehensive plan or county local water management plan as per 103C or 103B respectively for the duration of the state approved Plan.

Whereas the Policy Committee submitted the Plan for 60-day comment period; and

Whereas no major changes were requested by the public or by state agencies; and

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District approves submission of the plan to the Board of Water and Soil Resources Board. Contingent on recommendation of plan approval by the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) Northern Committee and subsequent BWSR Board approval, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District hereby adopts and will begin implementation of the Plan for the area of the Rainy Headwaters - Vermilion watershed within its jurisdiction.

Be It Further Resolved the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board approves the Rainy Headwaters - Vermilion Watershed Implementation MOA authorizing the appropriate agency officials to execute the MOA and allow the parties to carry out the coordinated planning, development, and implementation of the Plan.

Motion Made by: *Modich*

Seconded by: *Bainler*

Affirmative: *Bainler, Modich, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala*

Opposed: *none*

Motion carried on roll call vote

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Mark Peterson, Board Secretary