



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

Regular Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2024

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

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

Staff Present: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator; Corey Denning, Resource Conservationist; Joe Murphy, Community Conservationist; John McCormick, Regional Farm Bill Forester; Jon Utecht, Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator; Kaela Viehman, Watershed Conservationist; Miranda Frenning, Accounting & Human Resources Specialist; Phil Norvitch, Conservation Manager; and Tristan Nelson, Forester were present in-person. Zach Evans, Regional Farm Bill Forester was present online.

Others Present: Jerry Hovi, Supervisor-Elect was present in person. Ella Aspenson, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Jake Janski, Area 3 President; and Melanie Bomier, Board of Water & Soil Resources, were present online.

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Minutes of Last Meeting – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to accept the financial reports and program summary. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Accounts Receivable and Payable – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated 12/11/24. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Guest Introductions and Comments –
 - a. Jake Janski reported the MASWCD Convention was very well run. Their budget was approved with a dues increase. He was appointed to the Finance Committee. The by-laws were changed to allow the terms of president and vice-president to be two 2-year terms, Chuck Rau and Randy Smith were elected to the above offices respectively. All resolutions passed except the one relating to conservation easements affecting property tax values. Within Area 3, he is holding a kickoff planning meeting with a few staff and board supervisors to plan the Area's two meetings with the intent to make them more engaging. There will be openings on Area committees – finance, legislative and resolutions. Gary Rantala asked for an update on the status of the approved resolution to make a video on SWCD supervisor roles and responsibilities that would be used to inform prospective supervisor candidates. Jake advised it is in the budgeting process.
 - b. Melanie Bomier thanked the board and staff for the patience with the 2022 Rainy/Vermilion Planning Grant Reconciliation.

NEW BUSINESS

6. BWSR Funds

The mission of the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is to encourage sustainable use of our natural resources by engaging people in soil and water conservation in northern St. Louis County.

- a. Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to approve a contract with Bradley Nylund of Brimson for \$33,488.25 or 75% of the project cost, whichever is less for streambank and shoreline protection on Bassett Lake. Motion carried unanimously.
7. DNR No Child Left Inside Grant Update – After receiving an update, it was moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to discontinue the partnership with 4-H for the Resource Rangers program and explore other options. Motion carried unanimously.
8. Financial – Quarterly Update
 - a. \$500 Credit Card for Kayla Owens – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to table this item. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Certificates of Deposit Renewals in January 2025 – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to authorize the District Administrator to reinvest all 9 CDs expiring in January at the best available rate and term. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Copier lease/purchase and payment approval – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to purchase and pay for the Canon ImageRunner Advanced DX C3926i Color Copier for \$5033.08 with the maintenance & service plan from E.O. Johnson who utilized the state purchasing pool pricing. Motion carried unanimously.
 - d. 2024 Budget Revision – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to approve the 2024 budget revision as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
 - e. 2025 Budget – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to approve the 2025 budget with corrections bringing the anticipated budget surplus to under \$20,000. Motion carried unanimously.
9. Human Resources
 - a. 2025 Maximum Wage Increase Percentage – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Gary Rantala to approve a maximum wage increase of 5% for each employee on their anniversary date, pending a satisfactory performance evaluation. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. Authorize Supervisory Staff to Effect Wage Changes & Board Resolution 2024-17 - Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to approve Board Resolution 2024-17 authorizing supervisory staff to implement wage changes up to the maximum approved by the board without additional board approval. Motion carried unanimously.
 - c. Policy Update 3 – Moved by Gary Rantala/Mark Peterson to approve the third update to the Human Resources Policy manual as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
10. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
 - a. Elected Official Open House – after today's meeting 1 to 4 p.m.
 - b. Other

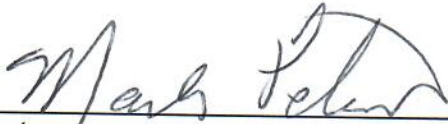
REPORTS: See packet for reports on file

10. District Administrator Report – Anita
11. Conservation Manager Report – Phil – Phil reported that he was out of the office for a couple of weeks. He is getting caught up from being gone. He attended an Area 3 Technical Training Team meeting this week to set the Area's staff training priorities for 2025.
12. Accounting & Human Resources Specialist – Miranda
13. Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator Report – Jon U. – Mark requested that Jon send the article he wrote about preventing AIS in the winter to the board.
14. Community Conservationist Report- Joe
15. District Forester Report – Tristan

16. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – John M.
17. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – Zach
18. Resource Conservationist Report – Corey
19. St. Louis River Watershed Conservationist Report – Kaela
20. Natural Resources Conservation Service Report – Maria Toral Rodriguez
21. Supervisor & Committee Reports –
 - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – November 25 – No one attended due to a snowstorm. The director's report was forwarded to the board.
 - b. SWCD Forestry Association – November 21 – Mark reported that James Aasen of Koochiching SWCD gave a report on beaver pond levelers that they've installed. The DNR's Nursery Liaison, Devon Wenthe spoke about his new role and the DNR's desire to grow trees that SWCDs need/want/have difficulty getting.
 - c. Other – Peggy presented a plaque to Gary Rantala in honor of his 21 years of service to the District on this, his last meeting. Gary indicated he will miss being a part of the board and thanked the board and staff for their ongoing work.

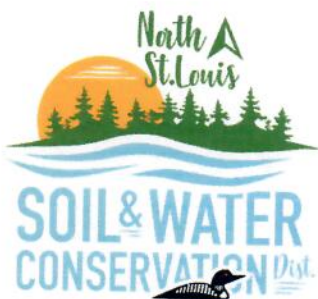
CLOSING:

22. Set Annual Meeting Date – January 8, 2025, at 10:30 a.m. – The annual meeting was set for January 8, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.
23. Adjourn – Moved by Gary Rantala/Chuck Bainter to adjourn the meeting at 12:18 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.



Secretary

January 8, 2025



Resolution 2024-17

**North St. Louis
Soil and Water Conservation District**
505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 749-2000
www.nsiswcd.org

Resolution to Authorize Supervisory Staff to Effect Wage Changes for Employees Who Report to Them

WHEREAS, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District has an existing organizational chart depicting its organizational structure, supervisory positions and reportability of all positions; and

WHEREAS, the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors has conveyed all supervisory authority to those supervisory positions, and

WHEREAS, the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District's Board of Supervisors approves a maximum wage increase annually; and

WHEREAS, the supervisory staff conduct a performance evaluation, at least annually, of each employee reporting to them.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors authorizes its supervisory staff to implement a wage change up to the maximum, upon an employee's satisfactory performance evaluation, to be effective on the employee's anniversary date.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an unsatisfactory performance evaluation may result in no wage change or a partial wage increase for the employee, at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that other wage and benefit changes are not included in this authority as they require board approval before implementation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this authorization does not include salary changes for the District Administrator who reports to the Board of Supervisors.

Motion on December 11, 2024, by: *Rantala, Peterson*
Affirmative: *Bainter, Pearson, Peterson, Rantala*
Opposed: *none*
Motion Carried Unanimously - *Modich excused absence*

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 held on the 11th day of December 2024 and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.


Mark Peterson, Secretary

The mission of the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is to encourage sustainable use of our natural resources by engaging people in soil and water conservation in northern St. Louis County.