



## North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District

505 3<sup>rd</sup> St N, Ste A  
Virginia MN 55792

### Regular Meeting Minutes March 12, 2025

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

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

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

**Others Present:** Melanie Bomier, Board of Water & Soil Resources and Ryan Clark, MAWQCP Coordinator at Carlton SWCD were present in person. Allison Praet and Blake Bartz, both of Natural Resources Conservation Service were present online.

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. Agenda - Moved by Chuck Bainter/Jerry Hovi to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Minutes of Last Meeting – Moved by Mark Peterson/Chuck Bainter to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Financial Reports & Program Summary – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to accept the financial reports and program summary. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Accounts Receivable and Payable – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Jerry Hovi to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as updated 03/12/25. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Guest Introductions and Comments –
  - a. MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program – Ryan Clark, Carlton SWCD presented on the program. He assists farmers in the region who are interested in learning about the program, designs projects/plans for implementation and moving toward certification as well as certifies those farms that qualify. This is done in conjunction with staff of area SWCDs.
  - b. Melanie Bomier indicated she was impressed with the immediate use of Lake Superior Capacity funds at this District and others. It underscored the need for the funding.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

6. BWSR
  - a. Cooperative Weed Management Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve a contract with Listening Point Foundation for up to \$144.00 for brush management. Motion carried unanimously.
  - b. Little Fork River Planning Memorandum of Agreement – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the memorandum of agreement for Little Fork River watershed planning. Motion carried unanimously.
  - c. St. Louis River Watershed Based Implementation Funding
    - i. Adopt-a-Drain 2024 Results – Kaela presented on the results of the 2024 Adopt-a-Drain program in the St. Louis River watershed.
    - ii. Stormwater Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Mark Peterson to approve a contract with Stephen and Susan Salzer for up to \$786 for critical area planting. Motion carried unanimously.
    - iii. Woodland Stewardship Plan Cost Share Contract with Landowner – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Mark Peterson to approve a contract with Michael Mahon, ICO Puddlenutt Lands, LLC for a forest management plan for 565.7 acres at the DNR plan rate totaling \$5,957.00. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Financial
  - a. 2024 Preliminary Year-End Reports – Anita reviewed the 2024 preliminary year-end reports.
  - b. Dashboard 2015-2024 – Anita reviewed the 10-year financial performance of the District.
8. Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings
  - a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – March 24
  - b. Local Work Group Meeting – The board set the date for April 9 at 1:00 p.m.
  - c. SWCD Forestry Association – March 20
  - d. Technical Service Area III – March 26
  - e. Other
9. Other - none

REPORTS: See packet for reports on file

10. District Administrator Report – Anita Provinzino – Also Anita reported that the October upgrade to from QuickBooks Pro Plus to QuickBooks Enterprise was discovered to be a scam in January. While the program worked perfectly, we were sold a license belonging to another company. A claim was filed with MCIT's cyber-insurance. We were connected with a cyber-attorney and forensic computing analysts. Two laptop computers were forensically analyzed to learn whether or not there was a data breach. Fortunately, there was no data breach.
11. Conservation Manager Report – Phil Norvitch
12. Accounting & Human Resources Specialist – Miranda Frenning
13. Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator Report – Jon Utecht
14. Community Conservationist Report- Joe Murphy
15. District Forester Report – Tristan Nelson
  - a. Tree Sale Report
16. Regional Farm Bill Forester Report – John McCormick
17. Resource Conservationist Report – Corey Denning
18. Rainy Headwaters/Vermilion Watershed Conservationist Report – Jake Bendel
19. St. Louis River Watershed Conservationist Report – Kaela Veihman
20. Natural Resources Conservation Service Report – Allison Praet indicated that the department is preparing a plan to reduce the workforce, recently terminated probationary employees will be reinstated for up to 45 days, any contract entered before this fiscal year or containing IRA funding can be paid, new contracts are in process although their future is uncertain, there will be a federal shutdown if there is no budget by March 14, and government credit cards and purchasing have been restricted, it is unknown if fuel cards are useable and if not, that will impact their use for Arrowhead Forest Partnership work.
21. Supervisor & Committee Reports –
  - a. Legislative Day at the Capitol – March 4 & 5 – Mark and Phil reported that SWCD's are highly respected at the legislative level for the work they do on relatively small budgets; however, funding levels may decrease based on the projected deficits. All indicated they greatly appreciate visits by their constituents.
  - b. Other

CLOSING:

22. Confirmed Next Meeting Date - The meeting was confirmed for April 9, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.
23. Adjourn – Moved by Chuck Bainter/ Mark Peterson to adjourn the meeting at 12:34 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

  
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Mark Peterson, Secretary  
April 9, 2025