

TRAVERSE SWCD DECEMBER 2024 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2024 by Chairperson Doug Frisch.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

Supervisors present: Dennis Zimbrick, Greg Hoppe, Chester Raguse, and Doug Frisch remotely. Absent: Jeff Peterson. Staff and others present: Sara Gronfeld, Trudy Determan, Bruce Johnson, Tate Serocki, and Devon Thompson, County Commissioner Dwight Nelson, and NRCS District Conservationist Blake Bartz.

Approve Agenda

A motion was made by Zimbrick, second by Raguse to approve the revised agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes of the November Meeting

A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Hoppe, second by Raguse. Motion carried unanimously.

November Treasurer's Reports

A motion to approve the November treasurer's report as presented was made by Raguse, second by Hoppe. Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence

Gronfeld circulated the correspondence folder and mentioned the MCIT dividend was paid, Brenda Mass had summarized weather data and prepared a report about crop loss for 2024.

Personnel Committee

Doug Frisch called to close the meeting to discuss personnel reviews and labor negotiations at 7:35 am. The meeting was reopened at 7:45 am. Raguse made a motion to approve a recommendation from the personnel committee for wage increases for all employees including a cost-of-living adjustment of 2.5% based on the federal COLA effective January 1, 2025, second by Zimbrick and approved unanimously.

District Technical Manager's Report

Johnson offered a report summarizing the activity he has been working on, including soil health technical assistance, feedlot programming, and technical services including completing tree shearing projects. He attended the Premier Soil Health Event organized by the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition December 3-4 in Mankato. Johnson was recognized at the event for his valuable partnership and efforts with the Soil is Alive on Highway 75 tour. There were no cost share contracts.

District Conservation Technician

Lennox delivered a report summarizing his activity including attendance at the MASWCD convention to assist with the Vigilis vendor booth with Gronfeld and Serocki. He also helped with the tree shearing projects and provided a summary of the dormant seeding that was completed after November 1.

District Engineering Technician

Serocki provided an update on his activities including work on Lined Waterway Outlets and assistance provided with seeding and site preparation.

District Conservation Technician

Thompson reported his activities assisting with projects and practices along with equipment service.

NRCS Field Office Report

Bartz delivered a brief report with local programming updates including EQIP planning and assessments. There has been no change with the status of availability of the CRP program; FSA is not accepting new contracts until the Farmbill is updated.

Office Report

Gronfeld offered a summary of grant and program updates. She was not available to attend the County Board meetings in November or December. She attended the state convention. She has been working to update eLINK grant reports as funds are spent.

Watershed Planning Updates

Staff met briefly to discuss updates for the Bois de Sioux-Mustinka plan in December. Projects and practices are going well, according to schedule. Gronfeld mentioned awaiting information from the Upper Minnesota River Plan status and expects a staff meeting after the first of the year.

MASWCD Area I Meeting Report

Traverse SWCD hosted the Area I meeting on November 19. Gronfeld delivered a presentation highlighting SWCD accomplishments and facilities, along with Bruce Johnson's 20th year employment anniversary.

MASWCD State Convention

Hoppe and Zimbrick attended the convention along with conservation partner award recipients David and Julie Metz. The Metz's were honored to attend the event and expressed gratitude for the invitation and award. The outcome of voting on resolutions was discussed along with other highlights from the event.

NRCS Contribution Agreement

Gronfeld discussed the request to execute an agreement with NRCS for five computer network seats and six phone connections in exchange for staffing services. A motion to approve the agreement was made by Zimbrick, seconded by Hoppe and approved unanimously.

December Meeting Date

The January meeting will be held on Thursday, January 9, at 4:00 pm. A motion was made by Hoppe, second by Raguse to hold the meeting in Dumont followed by a meal with local recognition of the conservation partner.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Hoppe second by Raguse to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 a.m. Motion carried.

DISTRICT SECRETARY

DATE