



11360 Highway 212 STE 6
Cologne, MN 55322

(952) 466-5230 | carverswcd.org

Carver SWCD Board Meeting Minutes – February 20, 2025

Held in conference room 1 at the Carver County Public Works facility in Cologne, MN

Board Members Present:

Chair, Mark Zabel
Vice Chair, Marcus Zbinden
Secretary/Treasurer, Jeffrey Sons

Board Members Absent:

Member, Michael Lynch
Member, Stanley Wendland

SWCD Staff Present:

District Manager, Mike Wanous
Admin. & Finance Spec., Felicia Brockoff
Landscape Restoration Spec., Seth Ristow (*arrived at 8:15 a.m.*)

Others Present:

FSA Program Analyst, Olivia Vinkemeier
NRCS District Conservationist, Katie Mattila
NRCS Soil Conservation Technician, Cindy Hoffmann

1. Call to Order.

Chair Zabel called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

2. Public Comments – None.

3. Agenda Review and Adoption.

Mike noted that MASWCD Area 4 spring meeting has been rescheduled to April 7. It was previously announced as March 26.

Resolution 009-2025: Zbinden moved, Sons seconded, to approve the February 20, 2025, Board Meeting Agenda, noting the MASWCD Area 4 meeting date change to April 7. Roll call vote: Lynch-absent; Sons-aye; Wendland-absent; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

4. Agency Reports

- a. FSA report – Olivia reported the 2025 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs sign-up is from January 21 through April 15. The sign up for Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program is January 29 through March 31. She also reported the deadline for applications for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) has been extended to March 1, 2025. The next County Committee Meeting will be held March 4 at 9:00 AM.
- b. Carver County report – Mike reported that Paul was unable to attend the meeting but sent a quick report. The next WMO meeting will be held on February 26. On February 18, the County Board adopted the WMO projects list update. There will be a work session planned in early March, to discuss the Public Works site master plan, which will include relocating the current driveway access, berms, security fencing, limited building expansions, and future additional buildings to the west of the current parking lot.

The WMO will also be hiring 20 aquatic invasive species (AIS) watercraft inspectors, and 4

interns this summer.

- c. NRCS report – Katie reported that it's been a little chaotic with the recent administration changes and cuts to staff, which included the Waconia Forester, Isabella Wendland. Staff are currently working through EQIP application approvals, 7 of which have been approved in Carver County. Four CSP applications have been received in Carver County, with a ranking deadline of March 21. A bulletin was also recently issued, stating all local work group meetings need to be held by June 25.

6. Consent Agenda Items

Resolution 010-2025: Sons moved, Zbinden seconded to approve the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of January 15, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
 - b. Acceptance of the January 2025 Treasurer's Report
 - c. Approve Peterson Company Ltd. engagement letter to conduct the FY24 audit, \$5,000 fee
 - d. Pay MASWCD Area 4 dues, \$350
- Roll call vote: Lynch-absent; Sons-aye; Wendland-absent; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

7. Regular Agenda Items

- a. Seth discussed the changes to the pollinator program he is proposing. Currently, the reimbursement for private and public lands is a maximum of \$1 per square foot, with the program maximum being \$2,000 for private land, and \$5,000 for public land. He would like to raise it to \$2 per square foot, with a \$5,000 maximum for both public and private lands. Chair Zabel suggested removing the sign-up periods. Zbinden suggested a representative from BWSR come to a Board meeting, and discuss their Lawns to Legumes program, and how it's affected Carver County.

Resolution 011-2025: Zbinden moved, Sons seconded, to approve the proposed changes to the pollinator program, and remove the sign-up dates from the program brochure. Roll call vote: Lynch-absent; Sons-aye; Wendland-absent; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- b. BWSR has released a request for interest (RFI) to participate in their soil health grant process, which is supposed to provide both federal and state funding for landowners. However, with the new federal cuts, it is unsure if these grants will receive federal funding.

Resolution 012-2025: Zbinden moved to affirmatively request participation in BWSR's soil health grant process and apply for the proposed \$180,000 in funding. Seconded by Sons. Roll call vote: Lynch-absent; Sons-aye; Wendland-absent; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- c. The MASWCD legislative briefing and SWCD day at the Capitol has been scheduled for March 4-5. Mike reviewed MASWCD's legislative priorities that included SWCD Aid, clean water funding, and RIM bonding funds.
- d. The MASWCD Area 4 spring meeting has been rescheduled to April 7. There is a proposed change to the by-laws that will be recommended. Chair Zabel mentioned another change he'd like to see, is under Article VII – ELECTIONS, Section 3. Election Procedure. It states that 'Voting shall be by paper ballot.' He commented that even if there is only 1 candidate, voting still has to be done by paper ballot. Chair Zabel may discuss that at the April 7 meeting as well.

9. SWCD Board Committee & SWCD Staff Monthly Reports

- a. Personnel Committee (Zabel, Zbinden) – nothing to report.
- b. Metro Conservation District's (MCD) Committee (Zbinden; Lynch alt.) – The next meeting will be February 26, Zbinden plans to attend.
- c. Education & Outreach Committee (Sons, Wendland) – nothing to report.
- d. Budget Committee (Sons, Zbinden) – nothing to report.
- e. WMO Advisory Committee (Zbinden; Wendland alt.) – Mike reported on the January 30 meeting. There were three new Committee members at the meeting, and potentially a fourth new member just recently appointed. Jim Boettcher has been elected as the Chair, and Mike Lynch will serve as the Vice Chair. Mike reported the group discussed the highlights from 2024, and the AIS plan for 2025. The next meeting will be February 25.
- f. South Fork Crow River 1W1P (Zabel; Lynch alt.) – Chair Zabel reported that he received an email update related to budget items for the South Fork Crow River 1W1P, which he reviewed with the Board at this time.
- g. The SWCD staff monthly progress report was presented and discussed. Seth reported that a native plant workshop will be held on April 10 at the Chanhassen Community Center.

Mike updated the Board on the re-determination of ditch benefits, and the public hearings that have been held so far. Chair Zabel also asked about the culvert issue along Salem Avenue, south of Highway 212. Mike explained that landowners are questioning if the new box culvert was installed at the correct elevation, there is a lot of conflicting information and staff will continue to review it.

10. Board of Supervisors Announcements

- a. Upcoming meetings/events:
 - March 4-5 – MASWCD Legislative briefing and SWCD Day at the Capitol
 - March 20 – SWCD Board meeting, 8:00 AM
 - April 7 – MASWCD Area 4 meeting, Cabela's in Rogers
 - April 10 – Native Plant Workshop, Chanhassen Community Center

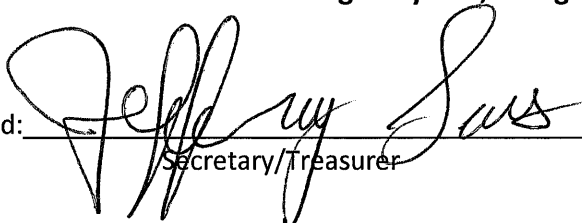
11. Adjourn

Resolution 013-2025: Zbinden moved, Sons seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 a.m. Roll call vote: Lynch-absent; Sons-aye; Wendland-absent; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 8:00 AM

Location: Public Works Headquarters, Conference Room 1
11360 Highway 212, Cologne, MN 55322

Approved: _____



Secretary/Treasurer

Date signed: March 20, 2025