



11360 Highway 212 STE 6
Cologne, MN 55322

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Carver SWCD Board Meeting Minutes – April 17, 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
Member, Michael Lynch

Others Present:

BWSR Board Conservationist, Jen Dullum
BWSR Ecological Science Cons., Erin Loeffler (*attended remotely*)
Carver County Public Services Deputy Director, Paul Moline
Farm Service Agency Director, Jennifer King
NRCS District Conservationist, Katie Mattila
NRCS Soil Conservation Technician, Cindy Hoffmann

SWCD Staff Present:

District Manager, Mike Wanous
Admin. & Finance Spec., Felicia Brockoff
Landscape Restoration Spec., Seth Ristow

1. Call to Order.

Chair Zabel called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

2. Public Comments – None.

3. Agenda Review and Adoption.

Resolution 017-2025: Sons moved, Lynch seconded, to approve the April 17, 2025, Board Meeting Agenda as printed. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

4. Agency Reports

- a. NRCS report – Katie reported that the southwest area of MN has received an additional \$1.9 million for EQIP contracts, and they're anticipating that additional preapprovals could happen. Staff are working through the CSP applications, Carver County received one application. They are not accepting any offers for CRP but will be working on status reviews for sites that have been established recently. Katie also reminded the Board that the Local Work Group meeting will be held following today's meeting.
- b. FSA report – Jennifer reported that applications for the ECAP program announced last month, were mailed out automatically by the national office. Producers can also just stop by the FSA office; the signup deadline is August. Acreage certification has also opened. The next County Committee meeting is Tuesday, April 22.

Mike asked if there were any updates for the CRP program. Jennifer reported that since there isn't a current Farm Bill, there has been no updates. She also commented that producers who are in their 15th year of CRP, could be granted a pass for a 1-year extension, if no new Farm Bill is developed.

- c. Carver County report – Paul reported that there are still talks of cuts for the 2026 budgeting process. Capitol improvement projects will be discussed at the next Carver County WMO

Meeting, since there are 3-4 projects that various Cities have requested get completed this year. Paul also reported that they will soon be kicking off the Groundwater Plan updating process.

Paul commended Mike Wanous for all his efforts with the recent ditch redeterminations of benefits, as well as the continuing ditch meetings that are being held.

6. Consent Agenda Items

Resolution 018-2025: Zbinden moved, Sons seconded to approve the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of March 20, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
 - b. Acceptance of the March 2025 Treasurer's Report
- Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

7. Regular Agenda Items

- a. Carver SWCD District 1 Board Supervisor, Stanley P. Wendland, passed away on March 16, after a courageous two-year battle with lymphoma. This leaves a vacancy in District 1 of the SWCD Board. Mike has drafted a resolution, that explains why we are now looking to appoint a new Supervisor for this position. The appointee would serve out Stan's term (December 31, 2026) and could file to be elected to the SWCD District 1 Supervisor after that. Chair Zable suggested a legal notice be placed in the official newspaper, directing people to the SWCD website for a map and more information.

Resolution 019-2025: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded to approve Resolution 019-2025 directing the District Manager to advertise the vacancy of Supervisor for the SWCD District 1. Roll call vote: Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- b. The Board discussed a strategic planning session at the last Board meeting. Mike explained that the consensus of the Board was to not hire a facilitator, but to try and solicit someone who could assist the SWCD with this planning session. Since there has been no word on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) funding, or on the County budget, it was decided to hold the strategic planning session after the June 26, 2025, Board meeting.
- c. MASWCD has sent out the call for resolutions. If there is a resolution that any Supervisor would like to bring forward, they can be brought to the May or June Board meetings. Mike reported the Area 4 managers have requested that the resolutions get submitted as soon as possible, so the managers could discuss them first and make comments or suggestions prior to the Area 4 meeting.
- d. Seth reported that he has received the first pollinator application of the year. The applicant is proposing to convert a current turf area into pollinator habitat. He explained that part of the project has also been approved by the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (PRBCWD), to install a pollinator lawn. The homeowners, Jonna and Eric Bartusch, will be hiring a contractor to install the project. The total cost estimate is \$3,079 for 280 square feet, with cost-sharing from the SWCD not to exceed \$560 (based on the \$2 per square foot maximum).

Resolution 020-2025: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded to approve the pollinator cost-share application with Jonna and Eric Bartusch for a turf replacement pollinator habitat project on 280 square feet, with a maximum cost-share amount of \$560. Roll call vote: Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- e. 9:00 AM – Erin Loeffler, Ecological Science Conservationist with the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR), joined the SWCD meeting remotely. She gave the Board a presentation on the Lawns to Legumes program, administered through a partnership with Metro Blooms, Blue Thumb – Planting for Clean Water, and BWSR.

9. SWCD Board Committee & SWCD Staff Monthly Reports

- a. Personnel Committee (Zabel, Zbinden) – has not met.
- b. Metro Conservation District's (MCD) Committee (Zbinden; Lynch alt.) – has not met.
- c. Education & Outreach Committee (Sons, Lynch) – Mike asked about replacing Wendland on this Committee for the time being. Lynch volunteered to be on the Committee.
- d. Budget Committee (Sons, Zbinden) – has not met.
- e. WMO Advisory Committee (Zbinden; Sons alt.) – Mike reviewed the Agenda from the March 25 WMO meeting at this time. The next meeting will be April 29. Supervisor Sons agreed to be the alternate for the WMO committee.
- f. South Fork Crow River 1W1P (Zabel; Lynch alt.) – Mike reported he attended a technical advisory committee (TAC) meeting on Monday. Most of the watershed-based funding to the Crow River, has already been encumbered for projects.
- g. The SWCD staff monthly progress report was presented and discussed. The beaver problem in the WAHIBO marsh was discussed. This is an issue that is part of the landowner maintenance agreement, so the landowner will need to remedy the situation.

10. Board of Supervisors Announcements

- a. Upcoming meetings/events:
 - April 17 – NRCS LWG meeting, 10 AM
 - May 15 – SWCD Board meeting, 8:00 AM
 - May 26 – Memorial Day – SWCD office closed
 - June 26 – SWCD Board meeting, 8:00 AM, followed by a strategic planning session

11. Adjourn

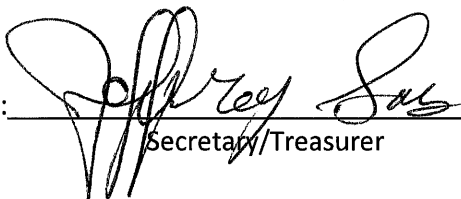
Resolution 021-2025: Sons moved, Zbinden seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:59 a.m. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

The NRCS Local Work Group convened immediately following the SWCD Board meeting.

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, May 15, 2025, at 8:00 AM

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

Approved: _____



Secretary/Treasurer

Date signed: May 15, 2025