



11360 Highway 212 STE 6
Cologne, MN 55322

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Carver SWCD Board Meeting Minutes – May 15, 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 (*arrived at 8:19 a.m.*)
Member, Michael Lynch

Others Present:

Farm Service Agency Director, Jennifer King
NRCS Soil Conservation Technician, Cindy Hoffmann

SWCD Staff Present:

District Manager, Mike Wanous
Administrative & Finance Specialist, Felicia Brockoff

1. Call to Order.

Chair Zabel called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

2. Public Comments – None.

3. Agenda Review and Adoption.

Resolution 022-2025: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded, to approve the May 15, 2025, Board Meeting Agenda, with the addition of Tyler Polster's anniversary date under Personnel Committee. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

4. Agency Reports

- a. Carver County report – Paul was unable to make the meeting this morning but texted Mike that Administration has issued a soft hiring freeze.
- b. NRCS report – Cindy reported that there were three additional approvals for EQIP, with one contract being in Scott County. They are still getting through the preapproval process with CSP applications. CRP opened for general and continuous signups on Monday, May 12, with a deadline of June 6. The signups are on a first come, first serve basis, and there is a 1.8-million-acre cap for the signup. They are currently working with FSA to contact interested landowners in the quick turnaround. Jennifer commented that the rental rates for CRP seem to be less than in previous years.

Cindy has been working on HEL and wetland compliance reviews in Carver, Scott, LeSueur and Rice counties. NRCS will be hosting a soil health education event on May 21. She also reported that NRCS will have a summer intern, housed in the Faribault office. There has also been an adjustment in the NRCS teams, due to vacant positions.

- c. FSA report – A written report was included in the packets. Jennifer stated 80% of producers have signed up for the Emergency Commodity Assistance program. Lots of producers have

already certified their acres. A signup period for CRP opened this week, there are 1.8 million acres nationwide that can be enrolled. June 6 will be the deadline to sign up for the first batching period, there may be additional batching periods added after that date.

Jennifer inquired about the SWCD's CRP incentive grant, and how FSA could help get the word out to producers about the incentive. Mike felt if the producer has an accepted offer, FSA could send them to our office for more information. The SWCD will also develop a fact sheet about the incentive that FSA can hand out to producers.

5. Consent Agenda Items

Resolution 023-2025: Lynch moved, Zbinden seconded to approve the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of April 17, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
- b. Acceptance of the April 2025 Treasurer's Report

Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

6. Regular Agenda Items

- a. A public notice has been placed in the local newspaper for three weeks about the Carver SWCD District 1 Board Vacancy. Currently, no eligible candidates have inquired about the position. Zbinden has a contact for an online source that is replacing the Chaska and Chanhassen areas that he will get to Felicia. Mike will also mention the vacancy to Terry Jeffrey, the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District Administrator. Since the vacancy is in the RPBCWD area, Terry might have some recommendations on interested candidates.
- b. Patricia Beier (Frederick N. Beier Trust) has completed constructing the water and sediment basin on their property in Camden Township. She has requested a contract amendment, to raise the total reimbursement payment from all sources (state and federal) to a maximum of 90% instead of 80% as stated in original contract. The discussion on this amendment request had Supervisors concerned that more landowners would be asking for additional reimbursements, after they already have a signed contract accepting the payment percentage terms. It was also discussed to amend the cost-share contracts landowner sign, with the maximum rate they can receive from all sources to a flat 90%, so this would not be an issue in the future.

Resolution 024-2025: Zabel moved, Zbinden seconded to amend the clause in the original contract that the landowner shall not accept more than 90% from state and non-state sources. Roll call vote: Lynch-nay; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

Resolution 025-2025: Zbinden moved, Sons seconded to approve a reimbursement payment of \$11,555.57 to Frederick N. Beier Trust for completing the water and sediment control basin. Roll call vote: Lynch-nay; Sons-aye; Zabel- aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- c. MASWCD has sent out the call for resolutions. If there is a resolution that any Supervisor would like to bring forward, they need to be approved at the June Board meeting. Chair Zabel mentioned he has an idea for a resolution that would be brought to the national level, to provide adequate staff at the local levels to meet the needs of the producers. He plans to draft the resolution and bring it to the June Board meeting for approval.

7. SWCD Board Committee & SWCD Staff Monthly Reports

- a. Personnel Committee (Zabel, Zbinden) – Mike's 26-year anniversary was April 26. Tyler's 3-year anniversary was May 11.

- b. Metro Conservation District's (MCD) Committee (Zbinden; Lynch alt.) – has not met.
- c. Education & Outreach Committee (Sons, Lynch) – has not met.
- d. Budget Committee (Sons, Zbinden) – Mike reported that budget reductions are likely for this budget cycle. A lot of SWCD staff time was spent on the County ditch systems this year, and while that staff time is billed back to the ditch systems, he hopes the County recognizes that extra effort imposed on the SWCD when it comes to budget cuts.
- e. WMO Advisory Committee (Zbinden; Sons alt.) – Mike reviewed the Agenda from the April 29 meeting. Chair Zabel mentioned data centers, and how they use an abundance of electricity and groundwater. Mike stated the County's Groundwater Plan will be updated soon, and that Zabel's comments would be a great suggestion to WMO staff during that update process.
- f. South Fork Crow River 1W1P (Zabel; Lynch alt.) – has not met. Chair Zabel commented that the Crow River was highlighted in the BWSR notes, for a water storage project in Renville County. He is also unable to attend the June 13 meeting, Lynch will plan to attend.
- g. The SWCD staff monthly progress report was presented and discussed. Felicia reported that the 2025 tree program went very well, and staff have already met to discuss the 2026 program. Mike reviewed information about Baylor Park possibly expanding, as well as the water quality in Eagle Lake.

8. Board of Supervisors Announcements

- a. Upcoming meetings/events:
 - May 26 – Memorial Day – SWCD office closed
 - June 19 – Juneteenth Holiday, SWCD office closed
 - June 26 – SWCD Board meeting, 8:00 AM, followed by a strategic planning session
 - July 4 – Independence Day, SWCD office closed
 - July 9 – Area 4 summer meeting and tour, Hennepin County

9. Adjourn

Resolution 026-2025: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, June 26, 2025, at 8:00 AM
Location: Public Works Headquarters, Conference Room 3
11360 Highway 212, Cologne, MN 55322

Approved:  Date signed: June 26, 2025
Secretary/Treasurer