



11360 Highway 212 STE 6  
Cologne, MN 55322  
(952) 466-5230 | [carverswcd.org](http://carverswcd.org)

## Carver SWCD Board Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2026

Held in Conference Room 2 at the Carver County Public Works facility in Cologne, MN

### Board Members Present:

Mark Zabel, Chair  
Karli Wittner, Vice Chair  
Michael Lynch, Member  
Marcus Zbinden, Member

### Board Members Absent:

Jeffrey Sons, Secretary/Treasurer

### Others Present:

Cindy Hoffmann, NRCS Soil Conservationist  
Jennifer King, Farm Service Agency Director (8:30 a.m.)  
Paul Moline, Carver Co. Public Services Deputy Director (8:47 a.m.)

### SWCD Staff Present:

Mike Wanous, District Manager  
Felicia Brockoff, Administrative & Finance Specialist  
Terry Meiller, Resource Conservationist

#### 1. Call to order.

Chair Zabel called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

#### 2. Public Comments – None.

#### 3. Agenda review and adoption.

Resolution 012-2026: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded, to approve the February 19, 2026, Board Meeting Agenda, with two additions: Soil Health Delivery Grant agreement approval and discuss a strategy session. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

In Supervisor Sons' absence, Zabel appointed Zbinden as the Secretary/Treasurer for the day.

#### 4. Agency Reports.

- a. NRCS report – Cindy reported there are currently 20 EQIP applications in Carver County, but that number will most likely change for ineligibility due to producer AGI (average gross income) limits. The ranking deadline is March 20. She also reported the number of ranking pools for FY26 will be notably reduced, and management practices will be capped at \$25,000 annually.

Carver County has 8 CSP applications, with a sign-up deadline of April 24.

Continuous CRP signup opened February 12, the first batching period ends March 20. If acreage remains available after that date, FSA will consider offers submitted after March 20 in subsequent batching periods. General CRP enrollment will be March 9-April 17.

Carver County has one application for the Regenerative Ag Initiative program, which is a 5-year contract. However, she wasn't positive this program will work for the producer.

- b. FSA report – Jennifer sent a written report and reported on current FSA staff workloads. Staff continue to work on the supplemental disaster relief and farmer bridge assistance programs. She also reported on the continuous CRP signup dates and batching periods and stated there are 1.9 million acres available nationwide. Producers are being asked to set up an online account to sign up for various programs through FSA.
- c. Carver County report – Paul reported the WMO is looking into potential boundary changes in the Lower MN River Watershed District area.

Paul reviewed the WMO annual report summary with the SWCD Board at this time. The report can be found here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/49c86c316cc14d14900875efc90d90d4>. The full annual report will be submitted to BWSR. He also reported that staff will start working on the 2050 comprehensive plan soon, since the due date is at the end of 2028.

## 5. Consent Agenda Items

Resolution 013-2026: Zbinden moved, Wittner seconded to approve the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approval of January 15, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes.
- b. Acceptance of the January 2026 Treasurer's Report.

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

## 6. Regular Agenda Items

- a. One landowner has signed up for cover crop implementation under the Soil Health Practices RCPP grant. Mike explained that since federal funds supplement this grant, the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) rules apply to landowners and identifying information included in the office SWCD Board Minutes. Terry reported this is the first contract received for the Soil Health Practices RCPP Grant. Each application must be batched and ranked before a contract can be approved. This landowner has ranked 45 out of 100 and has applied to enroll 65.31 total acres.

Resolution 014-2026: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded to approve the February batch with one landowner; and approve contract 10-1-1 on 65.31 acres, incentive rate of \$60/acre, contract total of \$3,918.60. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- b. The MASWCD legislative briefing and networking reception will be held on March 17.
- c. A two-page annual report summary for 2025 has been completed. Chair Zabel suggested budget information also be included in the report, and have it posted to the website.
- d. The MASWCD Area 4 spring meeting will be held on April 23 at Cabela's in Rogers.
- e. BWSR has sent the 2026 Soil Health Delivery Grant agreement, which can be used for staff technical assistance, that needs to be approved and signed through DocuSign.

Resolution 015-2026: Lynch moved, Wittner seconded to approve the 2026 Soil Health Delivery grant agreement, authorizing the District Manager to DocuSign on behalf of Carver SWCD. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

**7. SWCD Board Committee & SWCD Staff Monthly Reports**

- a. Personnel Committee (Zabel, Zbinden)
- b. Metro Conservation Districts Committee (Wittner; Lynch alt.) – the next meeting will be February 25.
- c. Education & Outreach Committee (Sons, Lynch)
- d. Budget Committee (Sons, Zbinden)
- e. WMO Advisory Committee (Zbinden; Wittner alt.) – Zbinden reported on the January 27 meeting, Mike Lynch has been elected as the 2026 Chair. The WMO presented their annual report, and Environmental Services presented their solid waste master plan, which had some questions from the committee. Paul reported they are still looking for 1 additional committee member for Commissioner District 2, which is the southern part of Chanhassen.
- f. South Fork Crow River 1W1P (Zabel; Lynch alt.)
- g. The SWCD staff monthly progress report was presented and discussed.

**8. Board of Supervisors announcements**

- a. Wittner reported that she and Seth Ristow are putting on a native plant workshop for local municipalities.
- b. Chair Zabel asked if the SWCD Board would be interested in completing another strategic planning session. The last one was completed in June of 2025. The consensus of the Board was to have another session, tentatively after the June 2026 Board meeting.
- c. Upcoming meetings/events:
  - March 19 – SWCD Board meeting, 8:00 AM
  - April 16 – SWCD Board meeting, 8:00 AM
  - April 23 – MASWCD Area 4 spring meeting

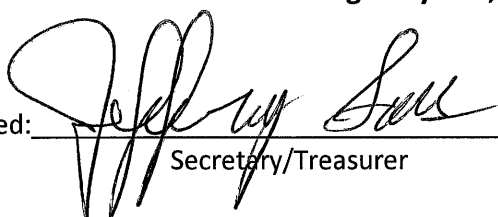
**11. Adjourn**

Resolution 016-2026: Lynch moved, Wittner seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 a.m. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

**Next Board Meeting:** ~~Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 8:00 AM Canceled~~

**Next Board Meeting:** Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 8:00 AM

**Location:** Public Works Headquarters, Conference Room 2  
11360 Highway 212, Cologne, MN 55322

Approved:   
Secretary/Treasurer

Date signed: March 19, 2026