



11360 Highway 212 STE 6
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Carver SWCD Board Meeting Minutes – August 20, 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

SWCD Staff Present:

Mike Wanous, District Manager
Terry Meiller, Resource Conservationist (partial meeting)
Felicia Brockoff, Administrative & Finance Specialist

1. Call to order.

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

In Sons' absence, Chair Zabel appointed Zbinden to serve as Secretary/Treasurer for the August meeting.

2. Public Comments – None.

3. Agenda review and adoption.

NRCS submitted a written report since they could not attend today. One additional Agenda item was added: h) Ratify the cost-share request from Rheingold Stables LLC to the South Fork Crow WBIF for a water and sediment control basin and a waterway.

Zbinden requested to also add a discussion item regarding a grant Carver County Environmental Services is seeking from the DNR Forestry Division.

Resolution 033-2026: Zbinden moved, Wittner seconded, to approve the Board Meeting Agenda for August 20, 2026 as amended. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

4. Agency Reports.

- a. FSA report – Jennifer King could not attend the meeting but provided a written report that was included in the Board packets.
- b. NRCS report – staff could not attend but provided a written report yesterday afternoon that was distributed to the Supervisors. Some highlights include the EQIP application deadline is September 11. NRCS is continuing to process CRP status reviews.

- c. Carver County report – Paul could not attend today, but conveyed that the County administrator’s recommended preliminary 2027 budget and levy will be presented to the County Board next Tuesday, August 25.

5. Consent Agenda Items

Resolution 034-2026: Wittner moved, Lynch seconded to approve the following consent agenda items:

- a. Approve the Minutes from the July 16, 2026 Board Meeting.
- b. Accept the Treasurer’s Report for July 2026

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

6. Regular Agenda Items

- a. The Board discussed potential candidates for Carver County’s 2026 Outstanding Conservationist.

Resolution 035-2026: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded to nominate Zellmann Farms (Dave and Jamie Zellman) as the 2026 Carver County Outstanding Conservationist. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- b. MASWCD will be electing a President and Vice President in 2026.

- c. Peterson Company Ltd. has sent the management representation letter that needs to be signed by the District Chair and Manager.

Resolution 036-2026: Zbinden moved, Wittner seconded to approve the Chair and Manager to sign the management representation letter and return it to Peterson Company Ltd. for the 2025 audit. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- d. Three landowners (two applications) have signed up for the cover crop implementation practice under the Soil Health Practices RCPP grant (P26-0006). Each application must be batched and ranked before their contracts can be approved. Terry reviewed these projects with the Board and reported the batching scores for this period were: Contract 10-1-4 [multiple landowners] for cover crops and no-till, 55/100 total points; and Contract 10-1-6 for cover crops only, 65/100 total points. Terry explained that the agenda originally listed three separate contracts. However, after discussions with the landowners and BWSR, one primary contract was created with a Group Addendum attached outlining the 50/50 payment split between two parties.

Resolution 037-2026: Lynch moved, Zbinden seconded to approve the August batch of cover crop rankings for 10-1-4 and 10-1-6. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

Resolution 038-2026: Wittner moved, Zbinden seconded to approve contract 10-1-4 for 629.5 total acres at \$95/acre (\$59,802.50 total); and contract 10-1-6 for 178.5 acres at \$60/acre (\$10,710 total). Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- e. The IRS has increased the standard mileage rate to \$0.76 per mile, effective July 1, 2026.

Resolution 039-2026: Lynch moved, Zbinden seconded to change the mileage rate to \$0.76 per mile, effective July 1, 2026; and eliminate the last sentence of the policy referencing motorcycle mileage rates. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- f. The MASWCD Area 4 fall meeting will be held on September 22.
- g. Discussion on Carver SWCD's 80th year of conservation. Felicia has contacted other SWCD's to see what they have done for their 75th anniversary celebrations. Since our 75th year was during COVID and social gatherings were not permitted, no event was held. Mike mentioned that he could talk to Paul about the "We are Water" display they will be receiving. Perhaps the SWCD and the WMO could plan a joint event, since the WMO's 30th anniversary is in 2027.

Chair Zabel suggested we invite representatives from MASWCD, NRCS and BWSR to our November Board meeting, and serve cake after.

- h. Rheingold Stables LLC has requested cost-share assistance from the South Fork Crow River Watershed (SFCRW), to install a water and sediment control basin and grassed waterway. The total cost estimate is \$18,180, and they're requesting 90% cost-share from SFCRW for \$16,362.

Resolution 040-2026: Zbinden moved, Lynch seconded to ratify the cost-share assistance request from Rheingold Stables LLC to the SFCRW for \$16,362 which is 90% of the total cost estimate of \$18,180 to install a WASCOB and grassed waterway. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

- i. Zbinden reported that Carver County Environmental Services is requesting a grant from the DNR's 2026 "Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency," and would like the support of the SWCD for this grant. The purpose of the grant is to reduce emerald ash borer impacts in Carver County, by removing and treating affected ash trees. Other possible grant items were discussed, with input from the Supervisors and staff.

Chair Zabel suggested at a minimum, a letter of support could be sent from the SWCD. He also suggested an SWCD committee be set up to discuss what could be covered under the grant. Zbinden and Wittner agreed to be on this committee. Mike also suggested Tyler and Seth be on the committee, for technical expertise.

Resolution 041-2026: Wittner moved, Lynch seconded to encourage Environmental Services to proceed with the "2026 Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency" grant application and include a formal letter of support from the 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) – did not meet.
- b. Metro Conservation Districts Committee (Wittner; Lynch alt.) – The next meeting is August 26 at 4:00 PM. Zbinden will plan on attending, since Wittner and Lynch have prior commitments.
- c. Education & Outreach Committee (Sons, Lynch) – did not meet.
- d. Budget Committee (Sons, Zbinden) – the budget hearing was held on July 28.
- e. WMO Advisory Committee (Zbinden; Wittner alt.) – the next meeting will be Tuesday, August 25 at

6:00 PM.

- f. South Fork Crow River 1W1P (Zabel; Lynch alt.) – the last meeting was held in July. The committee will not meet again until next year.
- g. The SWCD staff monthly progress report was presented and discussed.

8. Board of Supervisors announcements

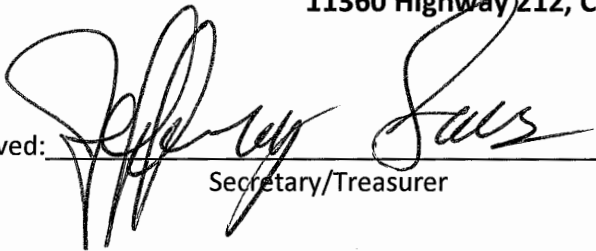
- a. Upcoming meetings/events:
 - September 7 – Labor Day, SWCD office closed
 - September 17 – SWCD Board Meeting, 8:00 AM

9. Adjourn

Resolution 042-2026: Zbinden moved, Wittner seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 a.m. Roll call vote: Lynch-aye; Sons-absent; Wittner-aye; Zabel-aye; Zbinden-aye. Motion carried.

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 8:00 AM
Location: Public Works Headquarters, Conference Room 2
11360 Highway 212, Cologne, MN 55322

Approved: _____


Secretary/Treasurer

Date signed: September 17, 2026