



**Minutes of the July 8, 2025
Brown SWCD Regular Board Meeting
Brown County Office Building, Sleepy Eye, MN**

Meeting was called to order at 10:30am by Craig Fischer.

PRESENT

1. Craig Fischer – Chair
2. Mark Wellner – Vice-Chair
3. Brad Augustin – Secretary
4. Bill Eckstein – Treasurer
5. Rae Runck – PRI
6. Melanie Krueger – District Manager
7. Jennifer Norton – Brown County FSA (exited 10:50am)
8. Ashley Fischer – Brown County FSA (exited 10:50am)

ABSENT

1. None

AGENDA

- ◆ Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Wellner to approve the agenda as presented.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

CONSENT AGENDA

- ◆ Reviewed the consent agenda items presented which included the June 16, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes, the June 2025 Treasurer's Report, and the Bills Report dated June 12, 2025 to July 2, 2025. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Runck to approve the consent agenda items presented.
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

GUEST – JENNIFER NORTON, FSA

- ◆ Jennifer Norton and Ashley Fischer from the Brown County FSA office discussed the upcoming County Committee elections.

*Norton and Fischer exited at 10:50am

SWCD STAFF REPORTS

- ◆ Reviewed staff reports provided by Botz, Giefer, Krueger, Olson, Portner and Spence.

PF/FARM BILL WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST REPORT

- ◆ Reviewed staff report provided by Ecker.

NRCS REPORT

- ◆ Reviewed report provided by Kjorness.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- ◆ Commissioner Braun was not able to attend today's meeting.

COST SHARE REPORT & CONTRACTS

- ◆ Reviewed the cost-share report and presented contract items for approval.
- ◆ Brad Augustin, \$200.00 MAWQCP certification incentive payment. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve the \$200.00 MAWQCP certification incentive payment to Brad Augustin.
 - Affirmative: Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
 - Abstain: Augustin
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CD28 Planning & Assessment Grant Request of \$10,000 to RCRCA for a Multipurpose Drainage Management Plan from ISG for the CD28 ditch system located within the Cottonwood-Middle MN watershed area with funding from the FY25 Cottonwood-Middle MN Watershed Implementation Grant according to policy. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Augustin to recommend for submission to RCRCA the \$10,000 Multipurpose Drainage Management Plan proposal from ISG for the CD28 ditch system.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

- ◆ **2025 Quarter 2 Budget Report:** Reviewed the quarter two budget report.
- ◆ **MCIT Work Comp Audit Results:** Manager provided information received from MCIT advising after completing the 2024 payroll audit for work comp, the SWCD will owe an additional \$302 which will be invoiced December 2025 and due January 2026. When the 2024 wages were projected only 4.0 FTE was planned and 5.5FTE was actual, which is why there is a balance due for calendar year 2024.
- ◆ **MASWCD Workshop/Training Events:** Discussed two upcoming training workshop events hosted by MASWCD, the Stewardship Summit in September 2025, and the District Manager Professional Development Cohort that runs from September 2025 through August 2026. Approval for attending the events will be presented at next month's meeting if anyone chooses to request authorization to attend.
- ◆ **Outstanding Conservationist:** Discussed the annual MASWCD awards program for outstanding conservationist. Manager will continue discussing with staff and present a nominee idea for board approval at next month's meeting.
- ◆ **Soil Health Practices Grant Update:** Manager provided an update about the FY25 Soil Health Practices Grant program and requested approval for an updated policy with a new item listed to round down contracted acres to whole numbers. Discussion was held. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve the updated FY25 Soil Health Practices Grant Policy as presented.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **FY23 Capacity Grant Work Plan:** Discussed manager's request for work plan activity category and budget changes for the FY23 Capacity Grant. Discussion was held. Motion was made by Wellner and seconded by Eckstein to authorize moving \$23,343.82 of the 2023 Capacity Grant funds from the Cost Share assistance activity back to the staff time activity categories as presented.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **FY24 and FY25 Conservation Contracts Grant:** Discussed manager's request for approval of an updated grant policy with changes made to the cover crop cost share rates and guidelines. Discussion was held. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Eckstein to approve the updated FY24/25 Conservation Contracts Program policy as presented.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **2025 Tree Program Report:** Discussed the 2025 tree sales program report.
- ◆ **Authorize 2026 Tree Program:** Requested authorization for the 2026 tree sales program so inventory can be pre-ordered with the supplier as soon as possible. Sales prices for next year will be determined later this year after supplier prices are known. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to authorize the 2026 tree sales program.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

- ◆ **Meeting Reports:**

- ◇ Krueger gave an update about the Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P Policy Committee meeting held in Springfield on June 18.
- ◇ Eckstein, Fischer, Runck and Krueger shared comments about the MASWCD Area 6 meeting attended in Mankato on June 24.
- ◇ Runck gave a report about the SCTSA board meeting and budget committee attended on June 26 in Mankato.
- ◇ Wellner gave a report about the RCRCA board meeting attended virtually on July 3.

- ◆ **Upcoming Meetings/Events:** A motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Augustin to approve the upcoming meetings/events:

- ◇ Friday, July 11 – GBERBA Policy/Technical Meeting, 9:30am, Fairmont (Augustin)
- ◇ Thursday, August 7 – RCRCA Board Meeting, 9:00am, Redwood Falls (Wellner)
- ◇ Tuesday, August 12 – Brown SWCD Board Meeting, 10:30am (All)

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Fischer, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned – 1:00pm

Secretary: _____



Date: _____

8-12-25