



**Minutes of the August 12, 2025
Brown SWCD Regular Board Meeting
Brown County Office Building, Sleepy Eye, MN**

Meeting was called to order at 10:32am by Mark Wellner.

PRESENT

1. Mark Wellner – Vice-Chair
2. Brad Augustin – Secretary
3. Bill Eckstein – Treasurer
4. Rae Runck – PRI
5. Melanie Krueger – District Manager
6. Brian Braun – Brown County Commissioner Liaison (exited 11:24am)

ABSENT

1. Craig Fischer – Chair

AGENDA

- ◆ Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Eckstein to approve the agenda as presented.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

CONSENT AGENDA

- ◆ Reviewed the consent agenda items presented which included the July 8, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes, the July 2025 Treasurer's Report, and the Bills Report dated July 3, 2025 to August 6, 2025. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve the consent agenda items presented.

Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner

Opposed: None; Motion Carried

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 provided an update on recent activities at Brown County.

COST SHARE REPORT & CONTRACTS

- ◆ Reviewed the cost-share report and presented contract items for approval.
- ◆ Amendment 1, CC2025-02, Scott Peterson, WASCOD, Home 5. Amendment is to decrease cost share funds from \$18,372.00 to \$14,266.20 which is 75% of the accepted bid amount of \$19,021.60 for the project. Grant funds encumbered for the amended amount are: FY24 Conservation Contracts- \$7,654.10 and FY25 Conservation Contracts- \$6,612.10. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve Amendment 1 to CC2025-02 cost share contract with Scott Peterson for decreased cost share funding.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ 25-CWMM-BRO-001, Greg Peichel, SSTS Incentive, Burnstown 12. Incentive payment of \$5,000 after replacement of a non-complying septic system. Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota grant funds through RCRCA will be used for the project. Motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Eckstein to recommend for submission to RCRCA, 25-CWMM-BRO-001 Septic System Incentive contract with Greg Peichel.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ 25-CWMM-BRO-002, Samuel Haun, SSTS Incentive, Cottonwood 7. Incentive payment of \$5,000 after replacement of a non-complying septic system. Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota grant funds through RCRCA will be used for the project. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to recommend for submission to RCRCA, 25-CWMM-BRO-002 Septic System Incentive contract with Samuel Haun.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ 25-CWMM-BRO-003, Nicholas Braulick, SSTS Incentive, North Home 20. Incentive payment of \$5,000 after replacement of a non-complying septic system. Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota grant funds through RCRCA will be used for the project. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Augustin to recommend for submission to RCRCA, 25-CWMM-BRO-003 Septic System Incentive contract with Nicholas Braulick.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CC2025-03, Kenneth Hanson, Cover Crop, Albin 26, 42 acres, 2 years. Flat rate cost share not to exceed \$60.00 per acre per year. Cost share amount of \$5,040.00 through the FY25 Conservation Contracts Grant. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve CC2025-03 cost share contract with Kenneth Hanson.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ CC2025-04, Dean Sellner, Cover Crop, Stark 17, 15, 24, and 21, 105 acres, 1 year. Flat rate cost share not to exceed \$60.00 per acre per year. Cost share amount of \$5,893.90 through the FY25 Conservation Contracts Grant. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Eckstein to approve CC2025-04 cost share contract with Dean Sellner.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried

*Commissioner Braun exited 11:24am

NEW BUSINESS

- ◆ **2024 Audit Items:** Reviewed the audit items received from Peterson Company for the 2024 audit services work completed. Motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Eckstein to approve the Management Representation Letter and the 2024 Draft Audit from Peterson Company.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **SWCD Aid Resolution:** Reviewed the annual resolution regarding use of SWCD Aid funding. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to approve Resolution 25-01: SWCD AID Brown SWCD 2025 Guidelines On Use of SWCD Aid Payments.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **Outstanding Conservationist:** Discussed staff recommendations for nominee and typical tasks and events for the award. Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Augustin to nominate Bill Vogel as 2025 Outstanding Conservationist.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **Soil Health Practices Grant Update:** Manager provided an update about the Soil Health Practices Grant program and requested approval for an updated program policy and for signature authority for the program. Discussion was held.
 - ◇ Motion was made by Augustin and seconded by Eckstein to approve the Soil Health Practices Grant Program Policy as presented.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
 - ◇ Motion was made by Eckstein and seconded by Runck to authorize District Manager as contract approval signature authority for projects funded with Grant P26-0005, 2026 Soil Health Practices.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **District Manager Staff Review Recommendation:** District Manager conducted a training phase performance review with one employee. The review was successful with a recommendation from manager to continue employment and offer a 1-step pay scale increase to the employee according to policy and with board approval. Motion was made by Runck and seconded by Eckstein to approve district manager's recommendation for training phase performance review of Isabella Portner and authorize a 1-step pay scale increase effective the August 2025 board meeting date pay period.
 - Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
 - Opposed: None; Motion Carried
- ◆ **Freeborn Withdrawal From GBERBA:** Reviewed letter received from Freeborn County noticing of their withdrawal from GBERBA organization.
- ◆ **Meeting Reports:**
 - ◇ Augustin gave a report from the GBERBA Policy/Technical joint meeting attended in Fairmont on July 11.
 - ◇ Wellner gave a report about the RCRC board meeting attended August 7 in Redwood Falls.
- ◆ **Upcoming Meetings/Events:** A motion was made by Runck and seconded by Eckstein to approve the upcoming meetings/events:
 - ◇ Wednesday, August 13 – Brown County Commissioners Budget Meeting, 11:45am, New Ulm, (Krueger, Runck)
 - ◇ Friday, August 15 – GBERBA Executive Meeting, 1:00pm, Webex or Windom, (Augustin)

- ◇ Wednesday, August 20 – Cottonwood Middle MN Policy Committee, 9:00am, Springfield (Wellner, Eckstein)
- ◇ Thursday, September 4 – RCRCA Board Meeting, 9:00am, Marshall (Eckstein)
- ◇ Tuesday, September 9 – Brown SWCD Board Meeting, 10:30am (All)
Affirmative: Augustin, Eckstein, Runck, Wellner
Opposed: None; Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned – 12:20pm

Secretary:



Date:

9-9-25