



FREEBORN COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
 MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 Thursday, June 12th, 2025, at 8:30 AM

1. Call to Order

- The regular meeting of the Freeborn County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was called to order by District Chairman Helland at the district office located at 1400 West Main Street, Albert Lea, MN on Thursday, June 12th, 2025, at 8:30 AM.

Attendees

- In attendance: Curt Helland (District Chairman), Scott Lightly (District Vice-Chairman), Vickie Heers (Treasurer), Brad Kramer (Secretary), Casey Madson (Supervisor), Lindsey Cornell (District Manager), Mark Trnka (Conservation Technician), Senja Viktora (District Technician),
- Absent: Chad Billat (Project Manager)

2. Approval of Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on May 8th, 2025, was made by Kramer and seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Treasurer’s Report

- Heers reported that the balance in the checking account was \$36,280.91, savings \$836,454.89, CD (10 month) \$250,000.00, and CD (10 month) \$235,000.00 as of May 31st, 2025. A motion to approve treasurer’s report and payment of bills was made by Lightly and seconded by Kramer. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. 2025 SWCD Aid Payment Guidelines | Resolution #2025-1

- Resolution was brought before the board for 2025 SWCD Aid Payment Guidelines. A motion was made by Kramer to adopt resolution for 2025, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. Cost Share & Grant Items

a. New Cost Share

- i. Cornell presented three requests for well-sealings to the board for cost share.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
WBIF-SW-FREE-24-15	WELL SEALING	\$2,500.00	\$1,250.00	C24-0197
WBIF-SW-FREE-24-16	WELL SEALING	\$2,500.00	\$1,250.00	
WBIF-SW-FREE-24-17	WELL SEALING	\$2,500.00	\$1,250.00	

A motion was made by Heers to approve contracts for funding, motion seconded by Kramer. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- i. Trnka presented a request for CRP Incentives for cost share to the board.

Contract Number	Practice	Project Estimate	Encumbered	Fund Source
FY-SW-25-CRP-01	CRP Incentive	\$3,895.00	\$3,895.00	P24-0021; P25-0455

A motion was made by Kramer to approve contract for funding, motion seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

b. Other Requests:

- i. Cornell brought before the board a request to change funding source of contracts WBIF-CW-FREE-24-03 at \$8,484.00 & WBIF-CW-FREE-24-04 at \$7,500.00 from 2024 Cedar Wapsipicon WBIF Grant (C24-0179) to the Cedar CRP Incentives Grant (P25-0462). A motion was made by Kramer to switch the funding source for the contracts from the 2024 Cedar Wapsipicon WBIF Grant (C24-0179) to the Cedar CRP Incentives Grant (P25-0462), seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- ii. Viktora informed the board that a contract for CRP incentives in the Le Sueur River Watershed has been sent to Waseca County SWCD for review by their board.

6. 2025-2026 DNR Obwell Contract

- i. Cornell brought before the board a request for the District Manager to accept the 2025-2026 MN-DNR Obwell contract once it's received to limit gaps in observation well monitoring. Discussion was made by Kramer regarding cost of observation and compensation received from MN-DNR for services. A motion was made to approve District Manager Cornell to accept the 2025-2026 MN-DNR Obwell contract once it is received, seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.**

7. Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA) Discussion

- i. Cornell explained the current situation regarding GBERBA membership due to Freeborn County's pending leave of the group. A motion was made by Kramer for District Manager Cornell to negotiate services with Freeborn County and decide the best action regarding GBERBA membership, seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- ii. A request from Supervisor Madson to be removed from his appointment to the GBERBA policy board was brought before the board. A motion was made by Kramer to appoint Helland to the GBERBA policy board, with Madson as an alternate, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

8. NRCS Report

- i. No NRCS representative available at the time of the meeting.

9. BWSR Update

- i. No BWSR representative was present at the meeting. Board Conservationist Annie Gunness provided a written report that was distributed to the board.

10. Supervisor Reports

- i. Kramer presented to the board an editorial he would like to submit to the Albert Lea Tribune that includes the Freeborn Co SWCD, discussion was had by the board regarding its contents. Consensus was reached that the article, as it stands, is not ready for publication. The board requested Kramer make changes to the article and bring it before the board during the regular meeting in July.
- ii. Kramer requested to attend the Interseeding Cover Crops & Side-dressing Nitrogen Demo in Rice County. A motion was made by Madson to approve of attending the Interseeding Cover Crops & Side-dressing Nitrogen Demo for staff and supervisors who would like to attend, motion seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- iii. Lightly reported attend a University of Minnesota Small Grains event in Rochester. Also reported he, along with Kramer & Heers, attended the NRCS Working Group Meeting in Blooming Prairie, MN on May 12th.
- iv. Helland reported attending a Blue Earth One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) meeting in Blue Earth, MN where it was decided that GBERBA would be the financial entity.

11. Manager Report- Previously emailed

- i. District Manager Cornell informed the board that the second half of the Freeborn County's allocation was requested on June 1st, 2025. Reported attending a meeting with Freeborn County Commissioners where she and Helland presented the Freeborn Co. SWCD's proposed budget for 2026.
- ii. Cornell gave an update on the Financial & Administrative Specialist open position. Discussed interview and hiring process. The Personnel Committee along with the District Manager and staff will attend interviews with applicants then bring suggestions to the regular board meeting for hiring approval.

12. Staff Reports- previously emailed

- i. Viktora presented the 2025 Tree Sale report to the board.

13. 2025 Outstanding Conservationist

- i. Asked the board for their recommendations for the 2025 Outstanding Conservationist; write up from staff on those recommended will be brought before the board for a vote in July.
- ii. The board agreed on the purchasing of a sign to present to the 2025 Outstanding Conservationist.

14. 2025 Freeborn County Fair

- i. Viktora informed the board of the upcoming 2025 Freeborn County Fair that runs from July 29-August 3rd. Suggestions for booth content were Wind/Water Erosion. Agreeable to staff presence at the booth for children's activity and to connect with members of the public.
- ii. A motion was made by Heers for the purchase of additional 'workers' passes to enter the Fairgrounds, seconded by Kramer. **MOTION CARRIED**

15. Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee Member

- i. Liz Ludwig from the FSA informed the board that there will be an opening for a County Committee Member that represents the townships in the northeast corner of Freeborn County. Nominations are due by August 1st.

16. Promotional Items

- i. Viktora presented to the board options for promotional items, discussion followed. A motion was made by Kramer to allow for \$1,000 to be spent on promotional items for the Freeborn SWCD, seconded by Heers. **MOTION CARRIED.**

16. Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation District (MASWCD) Area Resolutions Meeting

- i. The MASWCD Area 7 Resolutions meeting will be on Monday, June 23rd, 2025 at 9am-1pm in Stewartville, MN. A motion to approve attendance and registration fee for Lightly, Heers, and Cornell was made by Kramer, seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.**

17. Adjournment

- There being no further business, motion to adjourn was made by Heers, seconded by Lightly. **MOTION CARRIED.** Next meeting Thursday, July 10th, 2025, at 8:30 AM.

These are preliminary minutes subject to board approval at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors on Thursday, July 10th, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Kramer, Board Secretary

Date