



**Sauk River Watershed District Regular Meeting**  
**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, August 20, 2024**

Located at: Sauk River Watershed District Office, Sauk Centre, MN at 6:00 p.m.

<b>Managers Present:</b>	Bill Becker, Paul Hartmann, Scott Klatt, David Zerr, Scott Wittkop, Eugene Mensen, Kevin Lahr, Donavon McKigney, Russell Miller
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Jon Roeschlein, Administrator; Hannah Schacherl, Legal Counsel; Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager; Abigail Parker, Education and Outreach Coordinator
<b>Guests Present:</b>	Jerry Rapp, Randy Neumann, Paul Wildman, Bob Floerke, Knebel Family Farm, Steve Gudgell, Steve Notch, Todd Malecha, Patrick Backowski, Pete Sarberg, Jay Knebel
<b>Manager’s Absent:</b>	

**Public Comments -**

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance** – The meeting was called to order by President Becker at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
  
2. **Additions/corrections to the agenda** – President Becker asked for corrections or additions to the agenda. Water Resources Manager Steve Zeece III request that the board add discussion and action for resolutions related to the comprehensive water management plan. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the agenda as modified. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
  
3. **Consent Agenda**
  - a. Financial Reports/Meeting Minutes
    1. Checks for July
    2. Receipt Book
    3. Revenue Guideline
    4. Cash Balances
    5. Expenditure Report
    6. July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
    7. Permit Summary Table

**Manager Miller made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Manager Wittkop. The motion passed with all in favor.**
  
4. **Reports – Action Items, Reports and Project Updates** – *Administrator Roeschlein and staff*
  - a. Administration
    - i. 2022 Audit Report – Peterson Company, LTD; Remote Presentation – Michael Peterson, from Peterson Company, LTD, was online to present the 2022 Audit Report. After going through the audit with the board, he reported that the district has a good, clean audit.

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- ii. Administrator Report – Roeschlein prepared a written report for the board identifying all meetings and activities that he’s participated in since the last board meeting. One item that he noted was that he’s reviewing a proposal for conducting a workload analysis for the Sauk River Watershed District to determine what the work load capacity is for where the district is at as it seems it is at the limit. More will be shared at the September board meeting or when he gets more information.
  - iii. Outreach/Education Department Update – The Outreach and Education Department update was presented to the board in writing. One item noted was on August 27<sup>th</sup>, the Sauk River Watershed District Bus tour.
  - iv. Monitoring Department Update – The monitoring department report was presented in writing. There were no questions.
  - v. Water Resources Manager Update- Steve Zeece III, the Water Resources Manager, presented his report. Zeece highlighted some of the points in his report. Zeece also brought up the resolutions that were added to the agenda. Resolutions 03-2024 and 04-2024 were for the 2024 CRP incentive program and one for the 2025 CRP incentive program. Copies of these resolutions are available in the district office. **Manager Zerr made a motion to approve both Resolution 03-2024 and 04-2024. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.**
  - vi. 2025 Budget Public Hearing - President Becker recessed the regular meeting and opened the 2025 Budget Hearing. Roeschlein introduced the preliminary budget developed by the budget committee at \$1,070,004, project tax budget of \$150,000 for a total budget levy of \$1,220,004. President Becker opened up the hearing for public comment. Commissioner Randy Neumann stated that he would prefer the presentation of the budget to include the final budget from 2024 so they have something to compare to. **Manager Klatt made a motion to close the public comment portion of the hearing. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor. Manager Zerr made a motion to approve the preliminary 2025 Sauk River Watershed District Budget and authorize staff to certify the preliminary budget to the counties. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.** President Becker closed the public hearing.
- b. Projects
- i. Sauk River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 5 Project Hearing – President Becker opened the Sauk River Watershed Habitat Protection and Restoration Phase 5 Project Hearing. Zeece gave a brief overview on the project and where work was going. There was discussion and questions about the grant. President Becker opened the hearing for public comment. There was none. **Manager Wittkop made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor. Manager Miller made a motion to approve the order establishing the project. The motion was seconded by Manager Wittkop. Roll call vote was taken: Becker, aye; Hartmann, no; Klatt, aye; Lahr, no; McKigney, aye; Mensen, no; Miller, aye; Wittkop, aye; Zerr, aye.** The motion

**passed with 6 in favor and 3 against.** President Becker reconvened the regular meeting.

- ii. Little Birch Lake Outlet – Contract Award – Engineer Bret Zimmerman with Houston Engineering was at the meeting virtually. Zimmerman presented the bid recommendation. He reviewed a memo that he provided. The low bidder was Houle Excavating, LLC in the amount of \$111,825. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to accept the low bid from Houle Excavating, LLC for \$111,825 and authorize Administrator Roeschlein to execute change orders. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with majority in favor, Manager Klatt abstaining.**
- iii. Long (Higgins) Lake Outlet Project Updates – Pete Sarberg, Engineer with Widseth, was present and discussed the status of the Long (Higgins) Lake Project. Roeschlein provided a copy of his email and indicated that survey work is on the way. Roeschlein also provided a copy of the confirmation of the request for engineering services that had been signed and copies of the insurance commitment of the engineer and the oath.
- iv. JD 2 Sediment Pond Inspection Report – The JD 2 inspection report was provided.

c. Committees

- i. Water Quality/Projects – Managers Becker, Hartmann, and McKigney – No report
- ii. Rules – Managers Klatt, Lahr, Mensen - Roeschlein provided a report from the Rules Committee meeting and noted that the Rules Committee was requesting authorization to attend and monitor the regulatory work that is being undertaken through the comprehensive water management plan collaborative. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to authorize the Rules Committee to attend the meetings where Regulatory Review of rules, regulations, and ordinances within the Sauk River watershed is being conducted by the collaborative (for the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan), charge per diem for their attendance, and report back to the full board. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- iii. Public Relations/Education – Managers Wittkop, Zerr, Miller
- iv. Budget Committee – Executive Board
- v. Personnel Committee – Executive Board

5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or of Interest**

6. **Upcoming Meetings to be Announced**

- a. Regular Board Meetings
  1. Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Board Meeting, Cold Spring City Hall, 27 Red River Avenue S, Cold Spring MN
  2. Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
- b. Other Meetings
  - i. SRWD Board Tour – August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – Bus leaves at 8:15 a.m.; SRWD Office

- ii. September Board Workshop – Biological Municipal Water Treatment Facility, City of Cold Spring, 1204 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue N, Cold Spring MN at 4:30 p.m.

7. **Manager Lahr made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting at 7:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**

**Regular Drainage Authority Meeting**  
**MINUTES**

1. **The Drainage Authority meeting was called to order by President Becker at 7:25 p.m.**
2. **Additions/corrections to the agenda item** – President Becker asked if there were changes or additions to the agenda. There were none. **Manager Wittkop made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
3. **Drainage Specific Public Comment Period** – Jay Knebel, Knebel Family Farms, asked when the Zion/Munson ditch clean out would begin. Roeschlein responded and indicated that the district is still trying to secure contractors to do the work, although it is believed there is one ready to do the work as soon as he can get to it. Finding a contractor has been the biggest challenge, along with getting weather conditions to cooperate.
4. **Reports**
  - a. Pope CD 6 Irrigator Bridge Discussion – Backowski, Malecha – Roeschlein invited CD 6 Landowners Patrick Backowski and Todd Malecha to the meeting to discuss their irrigator bridges that are over the ditch system. It's evident that these irrigator bridges accumulate debris during high flows and limit the capacity and flow of the system. This is of concern to the inspector and it's been suggested that we ask the landowners if they could raise these bridges up to the top of the ditch banks. Discussion was held with Todd Malecha and Patrick Backowski. It was agreed that staff would do a site visit with the landowners and look at each of the bridge crossings to determine which ones would be priority to be moved first. This will be scheduled as quickly as possible, hopefully before harvest begins.
  - b. Ditch & Permit Manager Position – Administrator Roeschlein reported that the executive committee interviewed 4 candidates for the position of Ditch & Permit Manager on August 14<sup>th</sup>. The committee recommends the board hire Scott Wittkop for the position at a wage of \$61,500/year including all benefits listed in the personnel policy. **Manager Lahr made a motion to hire Scott Wittkop as the Ditch & Permit Manager at a wage of \$61,500 per year with benefits. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with majority in favor, Manager Wittkop abstaining.**
  - c. Ditch & Permit Manager – The Ditch & Permit Manager report was presented. There were no further questions. Roeschlein noted that the district is on track to have more permit applications to process this year than in the previous 5 years.
5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings –**



**6. Upcoming meetings to be announced**

a. Regular Drainage Meetings

- i. Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – City of Cold Spring City Hall
- ii. Tuesday , October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – SRWD Office

**7. Adjournment of Drainage Authority Meeting – Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor.**