

Sauk River Watershed District Regular Meeting
MINUTES

Tuesday, September 16th, 2025

Located at: Freeport Senior Center, Freeport, MN at 6:00 p.m.

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| Managers Present: | Bill Becker, Scott Klatt, David Zerr, Kevin Lahr, Paul Hartmann, Donavon McKigney, Russell Miller |
| Staff Present: | Jon Roeschlein, Administrator; Hannah Schacherl Jansen, Legal Counsel; Scott Wittkop, Ditch and Permit Manager, Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager; Kory Klebe, Education & Outreach Coordinator, Garrett Monson, District Engineer. |
| Guests Present: | Randy Neumann, Robert Floerke, Paul Wildman, Dennis Heinen, Rick Theisen, Steve Baloun, Steve Notch, David Regnier, Tim Massman, Troy & Sandy McCarthy, Jim Mohr, Matt Symalla, Jerry Zabinski, Hal Undersander |
| Manager's Absent: | Mike Proell, Eugene Mensen |

Public Comments – None

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. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Klatt. The motion passed with all in favor.**

3. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Financial Reports/Meeting Minutes
 1. Checks for August
 2. Receipt Book
 3. Revenue Guideline
 4. Cash Balances
 5. Expenditure Report
 6. August 19th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Manager Miller made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.

4. **Reports – Action Items, Reports and Project Updates** – *Administrator Roeschlein and staff*
 - a. Administration
 - i. Administrator Report – Administrator Roeschlein presented his written report. He stated that the staff would consider a board workshop for the November 18th, 2025 board meeting to begin the discussions regarding the Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD) Rules Revisions. The process that staff would follow is one that was recently completed in the Pelican River Watershed District and consists of several workshops to introduce board members to the rulemaking

process and purpose as outlined in the statutes. The workshops would consist of a series of 3 board workshops and then committee work would commence. By general consensus of the board, staff should proceed with preparing for this rules revision process and develop the workshops necessary to carry out the work. Roeschlein also noted that he'd be using some vacation time for fall harvesting in the coming months, timing is weather dependent.

- ii. Monitoring Department Updates – The Monitoring Department Update was presented in writing. There were no further questions.
- iii. Education & Public Outreach Department Updates – Kory Klebe, Education and Outreach Coordinator report, presented his report. Board members asked if the workload was greater or less than what it had been in the past or if he had any new events going on. Klebe indicated that he is busy with a lot of classroom work right now and also has online Community Education courses that he is doing for the next few weeks.
- iv. Water Resources Manager Update- Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager, provided his monthly Water Resources report. He noted that he will be doing a final walkthrough of the Little Birch Lake Outlet Modification project with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Conservation Partners Legacy staff, and Legacy Coordinator on September 25th.
- v. Permit Manager Report – Scott Wittkop, Permit Manager, presented his report. There was minor discussion and some questions in regard to his report.
 1. Permit Summary Table was presented.
- vi. Environmental Technician Report – Allison Schugel, the Environmental Technician, provided a written report. There were no further questions from the board.

b. Projects

- i. Long (Higgins) Lake Outlet Project Updates – Several landowners were present at the meeting to learn the status of the Long (Higgins) Lake Outlet Project. Roeschlein reported that the engineer is working on their groundwater calculations with their inhouse hydrogeologist. This work is done to establish the viable vertical and horizontal infiltration capability of the gravel pit reservoir. In addition, they are reviewing the outlet discharge pipe capacity and infiltration capacity based upon the field survey of the available temporary storage volume. These items need to be balanced to determine the proper operating procedure as far as draw down rate and capabilities of disposing the water. Landowners expressed concern about the time that this was taking to develop and felt that it should be simpler than what has been construed. Some of the next steps include coordinating with local landowners adjacent to the lake near where potential construction could be taking place, additional survey is needed to complete this activity and develop a summary. The engineer is in the process of developing a feasibility summary report and intends to have that completed within the next week or so and a meeting will be scheduled with the local DNR hydrologist and other DNR staff before the end of the month.
- ii. JD 2 Sed Ponds – President Becker called for discussion on the JD 2 sediment pond efficiency evaluation. The Water Quality/Projects committee met on

September 3rd to discuss the details of conducting an efficiency review of the JD 2 sediment pond project. Staff and committee members discussed how the engineer would propose conducting the review of the efficiency of the sediment pond. The committee recommended the engineer to develop a scope of work to complete this analysis and provide an estimate of cost and present it to the board for discussion at this meeting. The scope of work was provided. Engineer Garrett Munson explained what activities would take place and estimated the cost not to exceed \$15,000 and a report would be ready by April of 2026.

Manager McKigney made a motion to proceed with the sediment pond analysis. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.

c. Committees

- i. Water Quality/Projects – Managers Becker, Hartmann, and McKigney –
- ii. Rules – Managers Klatt, Lahr, Mensen –
- iii. Public Relations/Education – Managers Zerr, Miller, Proell –
- 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, October 21st, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
2. Tuesday, November 18th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office

b. Other Meetings

7. **Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting at 6:49 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Klatt. 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 6:50 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 Lahr made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Klatt. The motion passed with all in favor.**
3. **Drainage Specific Public Comment Period** – None
4. **Reports**

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- a. Ditch & Permit Manager – Scott Wittkop, the Ditch Manager, provided his monthly report. There were no further questions.
 - b. CD 17 Redetermination of Benefits – Several landowners were in attendance and spoke with the board and staff. Board discussion centered around cost-effective determination of equitable cost distribution for work on Stearns CD 17. This included discussion of the ‘alternative option’ for apportioning repair costs detailed in MS 103E.729. The pros and cons of this option were weighed against completing a redetermination of benefits. Other items of discussion included the conditions leading to the drainage system being considered out of repair, the responsibility to keep the drainage system in repair, landowner input, and ability to provide board input on cost apportionment. **Manager McKigney made a motion to direct staff to prepare a scope and estimate of costs associated with completing the repair process with the alternative option for apportioning repair costs for discussion at the next drainage authority meeting and also requested staff prepare a draft motion to set that process in motion. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - c. Private Crossing Requests – Staff presented private crossing requests for 2 landowners on CD 26 and two landowners on CD 15. Those Landowners are Hoppe, Job, Dirkes, and Wittkop. Staff recommended that the Drainage Authority authorize the engineer to develop the design and an estimate of cost for review and approval at the next drainage authority meeting in October. At that point, the drainage authority will be required to authorize the expenditures and proceed with the private crossing work. **Manager Zerr made a motion to authorize staff to proceed with developing a design and estimate of cost for the 4 private crossings discussed (Hoppe, Job, Dirkes, Wittkop). The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - i. Hoppe – CD 26
 - ii. Job – CD 26
 - iii. Dirkes – CD 15
 - iv. Wittkop – CD 15
5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or Information of Interest –**
6. **Upcoming meetings to be announced**
- a. Regular Drainage Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, October 21st, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - ii. Tuesday, November 18th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
7. **Adjournment of Drainage Authority Meeting – Manager Klatt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.**