



**Sauk River Watershed District Regular Meeting
 MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 21st, 2025

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

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; Garrett Monson, District Engineer.
Guests Present:	Randy Neumann, Robert Floerke, Paul Wildman, Steve Notch, Troy & Sandy McCarthy, Dennis Heinen, Matt Symalla, Jerry Zabinski, Hal Undersander, Val Finken, Megan Jacob, Bryan Brophy, Jerry Rapp
Manager's Absent:	Eugene Mensen

Public Comments – Hannah Schacherl Jansen informed the board that she was leaving Rinke Noonan Law Firm and that this would be her last meeting.

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 with additions. 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 September
 2. Receipt Book
 3. Revenue Guideline
 4. Cash Balances
 5. Expenditure Report
 6. September 16th, 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. There were no questions from the board.
 1. MN Paid Leave – Premium split, state or private plan – **Manager Lahr made a motion to approve the Sauk River Watershed District to use the state plan for paid leave in 2026 with employees paying .44% of the premium and will cap the use of intermittent leave for any employee at 480 hours in any one calendar year, leave time will be**

documented in 15 minutes increments, employees will be allowed to supplement their Minnesota Paid Leave with their vacation, sick leave, or short term disability payments, not to exceed their regular pay. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor.

2. Auditor engagement letters – 2024 and 2025 audits- Roeschlein presented the Auditor engagement letters for Calendar year 2024 and 2025 audits. **Manager Klatt made a motion to approve the engagement letters for the 2024 and 2025 audits, as well as, the cost of \$19,500 for each. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - ii. Monitoring Department Updates – The Monitoring Department Update was presented in writing. There were no further questions.
 - iii. Education & Pubic Outreach Department Updates – The Education and Outreach Department report was presented in writing.
 - iv. Water Resources Manager Update- Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager, presented his monthly Water Resources report. There were no questions.
 1. Abdo Grant Review and Management Assistance – Administrator Roeschlein presented the Abdo Grant Review and Management Assistance proposal. Zeece explained the purpose and need for having additional assistance with managing the finances on the grant program. **President Becker made a motion to approve the Abdo Grant Review and Management Assistance proposal. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - v. Permit Manager Report – Scott Wittkop, Permit Manager, presented his written report. There were no additional questions.
 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 – Engineer Peter Sarberg was present to discuss the latest outlet concept for the Long (Higgins) Lake Outlet Project with the board. The concept is to construct a pipe outlet to a depleted gravel pit and allow water to infiltrate into that gravel pit. This is a method that would address the zebra mussel issue in Long (Higgins) Lake. The next steps in this investigation include a meeting with the DNR Hydrogeologist to review the modeling information and to conduct a survey for the proposed alignment in order to develop a construction plan.
 - ii. JD 2 Sed Ponds – The monthly inspection report for the JD 2 sediment ponds was included in the board packet. There were no questions or further discussion.
 - iii. Crooked Lake Project (Guyette)-90% Plan Presentation-Bret Zimmerman, Houston Engineering, was present on a virtual connection and presented the

90% plans for the Crooked Lake project on the Guyette easement. Discussion ensued. There were no further questions from the board.

- c. Committees
 - i. Water Quality/Projects – Managers Becker, Hartmann, and McKigney –
 - ii. Rules – Managers Klatt, Lahr, Mensen –
 - iii. Public Relations/Education – Managers Zerr, Miller –
 - iv. Budget Committee – Executive Board – Meets on October 21st, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m.
 - v. Personnel Committee – Executive Board – Meets on October 21st, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m.
- 5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or of Interest**
 - a. Tuesday, November 18th, 2025 Board Workshop, Rule Revision
 - b. December 3-5, 2025 – MN Watersheds Annual Conference, Nisswa, MN
 - c. Tuesday, December 16th, 2025 Board Workshop, Rule Revision
- 6. **Upcoming Meetings to be Announced**
 - a. Regular Board Meetings
 - 1. Tuesday, November 18th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - 2. Tuesday, December 16th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - b. Other Meetings
- 7. **Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting at 7:16 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. 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 7:16 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 McKigney made a motion to approve the agenda as modified. The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- 3. **Drainage Specific Public Comment Period** – None
- 4. **Reports**
 - a. Ditch & Permit Manager – Scott Wittkop, the Ditch Manager, provided his monthly report. There were no further questions.
 - b. CD 17
 - i. Request for repair – The board reviewed an email from Bryan Brophy. Ditch Manger Wittkop presented a drone video of the area in question.

- ii. Tree Removal – The board discussed tree removal using maps that show areas where tree clearing needs to be done. **Manager Lahr made a motion to proceed with tree removal in the areas identified on the maps provided. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. Roll Call vote was taken: Lahr, aye; Hartmann, aye; McKigney, aye; Klatt, aye; Becker, abstain; Zerr, aye; Miller, no; Mensen, absent. The motion passed with majority in favor, President Becker abstaining and Manager Miller against.**
 - iii. Task Order review and approval – Engineer Garrett Munson, Moore Engineering, presented a task order for review and approval that covered both the repair report and alternative cost apportionment work estimated at \$46,100. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the Moore Engineering task order for Stearns CD 17 repair and apportionment work, not to exceed \$46,100. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - iv. Findings and Order initiating Repair Proceedings – Legal Counsel Hannah Schacherl Jansen presented a Findings and Order initiating the Repair proceedings. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the Findings and Order initiating Repair and Appointing an Engineer . The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. Roll Call vote was taken: Lahr, aye; Hartmann, aye; McKigney, aye; Klatt, aye; Becker, abstain; Zerr, aye; Miller, aye; Mensen, absent. The motion passed with the majority in favor, President Becker abstaining.**
 - v. Jerry Zabinski addressed the board with his concerns about CD 17. He indicated that most of his questions were answered in the discussions held prior.
- c. CD 19
- i. Repair request & video presentation – Ditch Manager Wittkop presented a video of the ditch system and talked about repair work. It was suggested that they talk to the landowners adjacent to the ditch that have the tree problem if there was a desire to remove those trees themselves.
 - ii. Private Crossing Request – Ditch Manager Wittkop provided a private crossing request by a Lloyd Linz. **Manager Lahr made a motion to authorize staff to design and get an estimate of cost for this crossing for further review and approval by the Drainage Authority. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.** The Drainage Authority will take action once the design and cost estimate is available for review.
- d. Private Crossing Design and Construction Approval – Ditch Manager Wittkop presented 3 different design estimates for the following requests.
- i. Job – CD 26 for \$19,500. **Manager Lahr made a motion to approve the installation of this crossing in the amount of \$19,500. The motion was seconded by Manager Klatt. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - ii. Dirkes – CD 15 for \$15,900. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the installation of this crossing in the amount of \$15,900. The motion was seconded by Manager Klatt. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - iii. Wittkop – CD 15 for \$16,010. **Manager Klatt made a motion to approve the installation of this crossing in the amount of \$16,010. The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. The motion passed with all in favor.**

-
- e. Ditch Assessments Payable 2026 – The Budget Committee presented the payable 2026 ditch assessment numbers and recommends the board authorize an assessment of \$7/acre on each ditch system. After discussion, **Manager Miller made a motion to approve the recommendation to assess \$7/acre on each ditch system. The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. The motion passed with all in favor. Manager Klatt made a motion to approve an assessment on the JD 2 Sediment Pond assessment area, averaging \$10/parcel for a total assessment of \$21,170.00 to be apportioned according to the benefits assigned. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - f. CD 26 Branch 2, Fork – Repair, drone video – Ditch Manager Wittkop showed drone video of this stretch of the ditch system and recommended that the board authorize vegetation removal in this reach. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to authorize staff to proceed with the vegetation removal. The motion was seconded by Manager Klatt. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 - g. Closed Session – Buffer Violation – CD 9, Albert Yarke – President Becker closed the meeting for discussion with legal counsel in regards to the CD 9 buffer violations. President Becker then reopened the meeting at 8:35 p.m.
5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or Information of Interest –**
 6. **Upcoming meetings to be announced**
 - a. Regular Drainage Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, November 18th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - ii. Tuesday, December 16th, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 7. **Adjournment of Drainage Authority Meeting – Manager McKigney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**