



**Sauk River Watershed District Regular Meeting
MINUTES**

August 18, 2026

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

Position types	Names
Managers Present:	Bill Becker, Scott Klatt, David Zerr, Kevin Lahr, Eugene Mensen, Jon Folkedahl Russell Miller, Donavon McKigney, Paul Hartmann
Staff Present:	Jon Roeschlein, Administrator; John Kolb, Legal Counsel; Scott Wittkop, Ditch and Permit Manager; Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager; Garrett Monson, District Engineer
Guests Present:	Randy Neumann, Paul Wildman, Dennis and Jacque Heinen, Jerry Rapp, Megan Jacob, Hal Undersander, Jerry Zabinski, Bob Floerke, Angela Sieben, Steve Notch, Ron Eikmeier, Ken Eikmeier, Bob Zabinski, Tim & Kathy Massmann, Derek Berdan, Eric Buch, Wally Stang, Doris Schroeder, Lawrence Schroeder, Todd Pfannenstien,
Manager's Absent:	

Public Comments – Commissioner Randy Neumann commented on Todd County's preliminary budget work and where they've been able to keep their budget increase at about 8% for 2026. He also voiced concerns over monitoring capabilities at the JD 2 Sediment Pond Project. Angela Sieben, Waite Park property owner, went up to the podium to discuss CD 17. President Becker asked her to wait to comment until the hearing is convened for the ditch system.

- 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 correction or additions to the agenda. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- 3. Treasurer Report** – Manager Lahr presented the treasurers report. **Manager Klatt made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Manager Mensen. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- 4. July 21st, 2026 Minutes** - **Manager Miller made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 21st, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor**
- 5. Reports – Action Items, Reports and Project Updates** –
 - Administration
 - Administrator Report – Roeschlein reported that the Douglas County Fair is August 19-22, 2026. He encouraged board members to stop by the booth to

visit or to even spend some time there visiting with the public. Staff are scheduled to attend throughout the weekend. Roeschlein noted that staff have been responding to calls and emails regarding the CD 17 proposed repair and cost apportionment process. He also noted that they've been tracking every inquiry in an attempt to better address questions at the informational meeting, as well as, the hearing. The informational meeting generated a public data request from Tim Massmann. Roeschlein has fulfilled that data request. Roeschlein informed the board that Noah Jensen, Seasonal Environmental Technician, has submitted his resignation effective August 28, 2026. He has been offered and accepted a full-time position as the Integral Ecology Coordinator with the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls. The 2025 audit is close to being complete. The auditor reported that they are finishing up the field work and the plan is to have the report complete before the end of August, which is the deadline for the extension through the State of Minnesota. Roeschlein informed the board that the September 15th, 2026 Board Meeting will be held offsite and is scheduled to be held at the Osakis VFW Post 7902 following a tour of the area projects. The tour will begin at 3:30 from the VFW parking lot. Anyone wishing to carpool from Sauk Centre to Osakis should be at the office by 3:00 that day. Roeschlein asked for an RSVP from board members by September 14th for staff to plan.

- ii. Monitoring Department Updates – The Environmental Monitoring Department monthly report was presented. There were no questions.
- iii. Education & Public Outreach Department Updates – The Education and Public Outreach Department monthly report was presented. There were no questions.
- iv. Water Resources Manager Update- Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager, presented the Water Resources Department monthly report. There were no further questions.
- v. Permit Manager Report – Scott Wittkop, Permit Manager, presented the Permit Department monthly report. There were no further questions.
 1. Permit Summary Table – The Permit Summary Table was reviewed by the board. There were no questions.
- vi. Environmental Technicians Reports – the Environmental Technicians monthly reports were presented. There were no questions.
- vii. Engineer Report – Garrett Monson, Engineer, reported that he has been focusing his efforts on the rules revision. He virtually attended the JD 2 Project Team meeting and has also been working diligently on Stearns CD 17.
- viii. Legal Counsel Report – John Kolb, Attorney, had nothing new to report for the watershed district board meeting but would be more vocal during the ditch proceedings later on in the agenda.
- ix. **SRWD CY 2027 Preliminary Budget Hearing** – President Becker recessed the regular meeting and convened the Sauk River Watershed District CY 2027 Preliminary Budget Hearing at 6:30 p.m. Board members had a few comments. One comment being that the board should cut the waterfest contribution for 2027 as they appear to have significant balances in their funds. The question was raised about what is the Osakis Basin Ph II Project. Water Resources Manager, Steve Zeece III, said that the Osakis Basin

Restoration Ph II Project was to pay off a SRF loan for the purchase of permanent easements in the Crooked Lake basin area. President Becker called for public comment on the preliminary budget. There was none. **Manager Lahr made a motion to approve the CY 2027 Preliminary General Administration Budget and Project Tax Levy in the amount of \$1,360,586. The motion was seconded by Manager Mensen. The motion passed with all in favor. Manager Miller made a motion to approve the CY 2027 preliminary levy to be certified at \$1,681,397.11 to include the general administration levy of \$1,396,397.11, the Osakis Basin Ph II SRF Loan levy of \$150,000 and the potential stormwater stewardship program project levy of \$135,000. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion passed with majority in favor, 3 against.** President Becker reconvened the regular board meeting.

b. Projects

- i. Long(Higgins) Lake Outlet Project – Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, provided the Long (Higgins) Lake project update. The final engineers report is complete and staff is waiting for the operation and maintenance plan to be finalized as an appendix to that report along with the water quality monitoring plan. The final report and appendices are expected to be ready by the end of the week of August 17th. The land survey team reports that the section breakdown fieldwork is complete. They are developing descriptions for easements and is estimated to be complete in 2 weeks with that information, around August 29th, 2026. The environmental team is preparing the Department of Natural Resources Permit application and materials. That information will be sent to the watershed district for review along with the supporting documentation estimated to be available by the week of August 21st, 2026. Roeschlein reported that Ron Ringquist is in the process of providing information to the board in order for them to set up an assessment area for the project. The landowners present asked what that would mean. Roeschlein indicated that once the information is back and the board is settled on how to set up that assessment area, there would be a public hearing and each property owner would get notice of the hearing with information regarding their parcel. Roeschlein reached out to Matt Bauman with the State of Minnesota regarding the grant agreement contract for the state appropriation. It was learned that the district would have to get through permitting with positive results and have concurrence from landowners on the final easement language before the state will deliver a grant agreement for review and approval.
- ii. JD #2 Sed Ponds- Inspection – The JD #2 sediment ponds inspection report was presented to the board. There was minor discussion about monitoring the inlet and the outlet of the sediment ponds. Roeschlein advised that since folks aren't understanding why sample collection at the sediment ponds inlet and outlet isn't practical or would provide useful information, he suggested that he bring someone in to better explain it to the board.

c. Committees



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- i. Water Quality/Projects – Managers Becker, McKigney, and Folkedahl – This committee met on July 28th, 2026 to discuss the stormwater stewardship program concept. The concept is being developed to address funding needs for management of stormwater projects and practices. Staff and the committee plan to bring this concept to the board at the workshop tentatively scheduled for October 20th.
 - ii. Rules – Managers Klatt, Lahr, Mensen
 - iii. Public Relations/Education – Managers Zerr, Miller, Hartmann
 - iv. Budget Committee – Executive Board
 - v. Personnel Committee – Executive Board
 6. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or of Interest**
 - a. September meeting will be held at the Osakis VFW following a board tour of the area projects.
 7. **Upcoming Meetings to be Announced**
 - a. Regular Board Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, September 15th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, Osakis VFW
 - ii. Tuesday, October 20th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - b. Other Meetings
 8. **Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting at 6:52 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 6:56 p.m.**
2. **Additions/corrections to the agenda item** – President Becker asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. The motion**
3. **Drainage Specific Public Comment Period – None**
4. **Reports**
 - a. Ditch & Permit Manager – The Ditch Manager’s report was reviewed with the board. There were no further questions.
 - b. CD #9 Buffer Violation-Attorney review and update on status – Legal Counsel, John Kolb, Rinke-Noonan, had no update on the Stearns CD 9 Yarke buffer violation. He is still waiting for the courts to get back to him with schedule and judge assignment.



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- c. Stearns County Ditch 17 Repair and Cost Apportionment Public Hearings- The minutes of the public hearings with comments are drafted under separate cover as referenced in these minutes. It is noted that hearing was recessed to November 17th, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. or thereafter as the Sauk River Drainage Authority agenda would allow, in the Sauk River Watershed District Office. President Becker reconvened the regular Drainage Authority meeting at 9:25 p.m.
 - d. Ditch and project assessments 2027- **Manager Hartmann made a motion to table this agenda item until the September board meeting. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**
 5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or Information of Interest –**
 6. **Upcoming meetings to be announced**
 - a. Regular Drainage Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, September 15th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, Osakis VFW
 - ii. Tuesday, October 20th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 7. **Adjournment of Drainage Authority Meeting – Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Lahr. The motion passed with all in favor.**