



**Sauk River Watershed District Regular Meeting
MINUTES**

September 15, 2026

Located at: Osakis VFW Post 7902, 701 8th Ave E., Osakis, 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; Scott Wittkop, Ditch and Permit Manager; Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager; Garrett Monson, District Engineer
Guests Present:	Randy Neumann, Paul Wildman, Megan Jacob, Hal Undersander, Jerry Zabinski, Bob Floerke, Bruce Magnus, Terry Malum, Danny Moon, Tim Greene, Stephanie Finnegan, Judy Dvorak, Dennis Paul, Steve Baloun
Manager's Absent:	
Staff Absent:	John Kolb, Legal Counsel

Public Comments – Todd County Commissioner Randy Neumann asked about the project tax levy that was included in the proposed preliminary levy for the Sauk River Watershed District.

- 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 Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- 4. August 18th, 2026 Minutes** - **Manager Zerr made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 18th, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor**
- 5. Reports – Action Items, Reports and Project Updates –**
 - a. Administration**
 - i. Administrator Report** – Roeschlein reviewed his administrators report. He noted that the ditch assessment discussion is on the agenda for this meeting. An updated spreadsheet was provided with the board packet on September 9th. He reported that the Sauk River Watershed District preliminary levy for 2027 was certified on August 26th, 2026. He also reported that the 2025 audit is complete and the reports have been submitted to the state auditor's office and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) as required on August 28th, 2026.

The extension deadline from the State Auditor was August 31st, 2026. A copy of the report was sent to the board under separate cover. He noted that if a presentation from Auditor Michael Peterson is desired, he could schedule it for the October board meeting if Peterson is available. Roeschlein reported that several staff will be attending Allison Schugel's wedding on September 18th. There will be staff covering the office until the end of the day so there will be no disruption of service. Roeschlein also reported that he'd be using some vacation time once again to help with fall harvest in the coming months. He will have access to messages, emails, cell and office phone during that time and will have his computer at home to take care of watershed district needs as necessary.

- ii. Monitoring Department Updates – The Environmental Monitoring Department monthly report was reviewed. Abigail Borgerding, Environmental Monitoring Manager, was in attendance and answered questions.
- iii. Education & Pubic Outreach Department Updates – The Education and Public Outreach Department monthly report was presented. There were no questions. Roeschlein pointed out the activity on Saturday, October 3rd called the Sauk River Trash Bash which is a community trash clean up along the shores of the Sauk River in and around Cold Spring. Board Members were encouraged to attend if they are able.
- iv. Water Resources Manager Update- Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager, presented his monthly general update.
 - 1. SRCWMP Plan Resolution-FY 24 Extension – The board reviewed the Resolution #02-2026 The Sauk River Watershed Collaborative Watershed Based Implementation Fund (WBIF) Fiscal Year (FY) 24 Grant Period Extension and Grand Agreement Amendment. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve Resolution #02-2026. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- 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, gave a verbal update on the projects that he is involved in. He is preparing task orders for further project development in the Osakis Lake Sub watershed and he'll be working with the JD 2 project team in prioritizing implementation tasks in the sub watershed.
- viii. Legal Counsel Report – No report.

b. Projects

- i. Long(Higgins) Lake Outlet Project – Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, reported on the Long (Higgins) Lake project development. He indicated that he'd received the final engineers report, which included the construction estimate, the operations and maintenance plan, and groundwater monitoring plan. This was provided to the board under separate cover in the board packet. He noted that

the district has also received the construction plans for the project which was also included under separate cover in the board packet. Staff is currently working on estimating the annual cost to implement the operations and maintenance plan and the groundwater monitoring plan. Roeschlein hopes to have this information at an upcoming board meeting for discussion.

1. Assessment Area Recommendation- Staff has received the report from Ron Ringquist, Appraiser, regarding the recommended assessment percentage of properties that would benefit from this outlet project. Ron was in attendance and presented his report to the board. Roeschlein reported that easement descriptions are not complete but they will be ready very soon. Once they have been received, they will be forwarded to legal counsel and the appraiser for drafting of the easement documents and determining the value of that easement respectively. Once the documents are ready, staff will meet with the individual landowners and work with them to acquire the necessary easements for the project. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Permit Application for the project was submitted on September 3rd. Roeschlein explained that there was an initial 15-day review time to determine if the application is complete with all supporting information. Staff has been told that the process could take 150 days or more. Staff intends to meet with Birchdale Township in the near future to discuss the work to be done on their road right-of-way. Once the permits are in hand, easements are secured and the board has held the required public hearings to establish the project, staff will be able to secure the funding agreement from the State of Minnesota.
- ii. JD #2 Sed Ponds- Inspection – The JD #2 sediment ponds inspection report was presented to the board.
 1. Monitoring discussion - Abi Borgerding, Environmental Monitoring Manager, presented a memo to the board in regard to the monitoring difficulties for the sediment pond area and JD 2 drainage system as a whole.
- iii. Krantz Lake Annual Inspection Report – The board was provided an inspection report of Krantz Lake.
- iv. Little Birch Lake Outlet Annual Inspection Report – The board was provided an inspection report of the Little Birch Lake Outlet.
- c. Committees
 - i. Water Quality/Projects – Managers Becker, McKigney, and Folkedahl
 - 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

7. Upcoming Meetings to be Announced

- a. Regular Board Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, October 20th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office



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- ii. Tuesday, November 17th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - b. Other Meetings

- 8. **Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting at 7:05 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager McKigney. 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 7:05 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 Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- 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 or discussion.
 - b. CD #9 Buffer Violation-Attorney review and update on status – Legal Counsel, John Kolb, Rinke-Noonan, was unable to attend the monthly meeting, therefore, there was no discussion on the CD 9 buffer violation.
 - c. Stearns County Ditch 17 Update- There was no discussion on CD #17.
 - d. Ditch and project assessments 2027- Roeschlein led the board through the ditch and project assessment exercise that had been tabled from the August meeting. The board reviewed each ditch system’s fund balance and potential future work load and set a preliminary assessment amount for those systems. The board recommended the following assessments payable 2027: Pope CD #6 \$30,000, Pope CD #11 \$10,000, Pope/Stearns JD1 \$25,000. With outlet fees assessed to Pope CD #11 and Pope/Stearns JD 1, the assessments work out to be Pope CD 6 at \$15,000, Pope CD #11 at \$14,080, and Pope/Stearns JD 1 at \$35,920. Stearns CD #19 was recommended that a \$95,000 assessment be certified for a period of 10 years. Stearns CD #24 was recommended that a \$30,000 assessment be certified for 5 years. The JD 2 Sediment Ponds was recommended that a \$30,000 assessment be certified payable 2027. Being there were questions asked about some of the fund balances, Roeschlein indicated he would be asking some questions about Zion-Munson and a couple of the other systems and will report back to the board in October. Therefore, these assessments are considered preliminary in case there are any adjustments needed to fund balances and assessment



collections on any of the other systems. Once these numbers are finalized, Roeschlein will send a letter out to each landowner on the systems that are being assessed letting them know what their share of the assessment will be. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to approve the preliminary assessments. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with the majority in favor, Managers Klatt and Lahr opposed, and Manager McKigney abstained.**

5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or Information of Interest –**
6. **Upcoming meetings to be announced**
 - a. Regular Drainage Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, October 20th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - ii. Tuesday, November 17th, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
7. **Adjournment of Drainage Authority Meeting – Manager Klatt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor.**