



112 5<sup>th</sup> Street, PO Box 161  
Gaylord, MN 55334  
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## MINNESOTA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Minutes of the Sibley Soil & Water Conservation District, 112 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Gaylord, MN on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

The meeting was called to order by Chair – Thies at 3:58 p.m.

**Members Present:** Chair, Kathleen Thies  
Vice Chair, Loren Evenson  
Secretary, Paul Wiemann  
Treasurer, Robert Nielsen  
Member, Wayne Grams

**Others Present:** District Manager, Joel Wurscher  
District Technician, Jeremy Buckentin  
Water Resources Coordinator, Jack Bushman

Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to approve the March 2024 agenda as presented. Ayes Thies, Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen. Carried.

Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by Grams, it was moved to approve the minutes of the February 2024 meeting. Ayes Thies, Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams. Carried.

Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by Evenson, it was moved to approve thirty-nine paid bills for the month of February totaling \$40,923.78. Ayes Thies, Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams. Carried.

Upon a motion by Thies and seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to approve the March 2024 Treasurer's report subjected to audit. Ayes Thies, Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams. Carried.

**Old Business:** Wurscher provided the board with a brief update on the potential office expansion.

**NRCS Report:** See attached.

### **New Business:**

**Lower MN River West WBIF Reconciliation:** Wurscher gave some background on BWSR's grant reconciliation process. After reaching that 50% spent mark, Julie Krebs and Jeremy Maul visited the SWCD office to go through expenditures and project files. Wurscher informed the Board that BWSR had identified a non-compliant contract (FY23 WBIF-8). To rectify the issue, BWSR is requiring Sibley SWCD to submit a corrective action plan within 60 days, describing how to prevent errors in the future.

**CPL Grant – County Rd. 6:** Bushman described to the Board two grant opportunities he had worked on in the past month in partnership with Sibley County. The first opportunity explored was a potential pollinator planting in conjunction with the construction of County Rd. 6 and bike trail. After several

meetings, it was determined not to pursue any additional grant funding, however the District would still provide technical assistance to the County if needed.

The second grant opportunity explored was towards the removal of ash trees affected by emerald ash borer within the camping areas of High Island Creek County Park. Bushman explained to the Board that the County would be the primary contact/project manager and be responsible to hire out a contractor to remove around 260 total trees followed up by replanting native trees. Bushman stated that he will be submitting a CPL grant proposal with a budget of \$50,000 on behalf of Sibley County efforts by March 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Supervisor & Staff Reports:** See attached.

**Other Business:** Wurscher notified the Board that efforts towards education and outreach of AIS awareness will be the main focus for the AIS program in 2024. With that in mind, Wurscher told the Board that the SWCD has contracted with both CLIMB Theatre and MN Lakes & River/LB Video Productions for said work.

At the beginning of the meeting Wurscher had passed out some handouts produced by MASWCD related to their legislative priorities. Wurscher gave a brief update on several of the bills that could affect the SWCD if passed.

**Next Meeting:** April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, starting at 4 p.m., located at 112 5th Street, Gaylord, MN.

**Adjourn:** Upon a motion by Grams seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:48 p.m. Ayes Thies, Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams. Carried.

Approved: April 10, 2024

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Secretary