



112 5th Street, PO Box 161
Gaylord, MN 55334
(507) 702-7077

MINNESOTA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Minutes of the Sibley Soil & Water Conservation District, 112 5th Street, Gaylord, MN on
July 8, 2025.

The meeting was called to order by Chair – Evenson at 4:00 p.m.

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

Others Present: District Manager, Joel Wurscher
Senior District Technician, Jeremy Buckentin
Water Resources Coordinator, Jack Bushman
Conservation Technician, Tara O'Brien
Operations Specialist, Hayley Thies
FSA – Lead Program Analyst, Cassidy Battcher
NRCS – District Conservationist, Chris Engh
BWSR – Board Conservationist, Shane Bugeja

Upon a motion by Grams and seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to approve the July 2025 meeting agenda with no revisions. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Upon a motion by K. Thies and seconded by Wiemann, it was moved to approve the minutes of the June 2025 meeting with no revisions. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by K. Thies, it was moved to approve thirty-five paid bills for the month of June totaling \$81,917.09. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Upon a motion by K. Thies and seconded by Grams, it was moved to approve the July 2025 Treasurer's report subjected to audit. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

FSA Report: See attached.

NRCS Report: See attached.

BWSR Report: Bugeja provided the Board with the following approximate timeline for receipt of grant funds: RCPP – July, Conservation Contract Delivery – August, Block Grants – September. He then informed the Board that the grants administration manual (GAM) had been updated and was effective starting July 1st. This document contained updates to the payment policy for multi-year cover crop contracts, in which payments are to be made yearly beginning in FY26 grants and beyond.

Old Business: The Board discussed how they would prefer to receive their meeting packets moving forward. An email the week before and a physical copy at the meeting were determined to be the preferred choice.

New Business:

Cost Share: The contract holder for PWP-1 has requested cost share payment toward a drinking water treatment system located in Bernadotte Township. The system cost \$4,724.50 and the contract holder was approved for cost share at 100%, not to exceed \$3,000.00. Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by Grams, it was moved to approve the requested cost share of \$3,000.00. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

A request was made to enter into a contract (FY25 WBIF-5) for a WASCOP (P.S. 638) located in Faxon Township. A bid for the project came in at \$17,990.00. The landowner is requesting that the watershed partnership provide cost share in the amount of \$9,540.00, in conjunction with their EQIP contract. The EQIP contract and cost share provided shall not exceed 100% of the total cost of the project. Upon a motion by K. Thies and seconded by Wiemann, it was moved to approve the requested cost share contract. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

A request was made to enter into a contract (FY25 WBIF-6) for a 3 WASCOPS (P.S. 638) located in Jessenland Township. A bid for the project came in at \$29,157.10. The landowner is requesting that the watershed partnership provide cost share in the amount of \$7,353.10, in conjunction with their EQIP contract. The EQIP contract and cost share provided shall not exceed 100% of the total cost of the project. Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by Grams, it was moved to approve the requested cost share contract. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

A request was made to enter into a contract (FY25 CCRP-1) for a Continuous CRP contract incentive of \$250/acre. The contract is for a CP23A practice of 5.83 acres, with a contract length of 15 years. The project lands within a high priority area for altered hydrology in Washington Lake Township. Upon a motion by K. Thies and seconded by Nielsen, it was moved to approve the requested incentive contract for a total of \$1,457.50. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

A request was made to enter into a contract (FY25 CCRP-2) for a Continuous CRP contract incentive of \$250/acre. The contract is for a CP23A practice of 12.50 acres, with a contract length of 15 years. The project lands within a high priority area for altered hydrology in Transit Township. Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by K. Thies, it was moved to approve the requested incentive contract for a total of \$3,125.00. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Aquatic Invasive Species – Clear Lake Project: Houston Engineering Inc submitted a bid package for the Clear Lake Project to 9 local contractors. The lowest bid belonging to Weber Multi-services LLC., in the amount of \$26,000.00. Upon a motion by Wiemann and seconded by K. Thies, it was moved to accept the Weber Multi-Services LLC bid with the intention that the project be completed by October 31, 2025. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Strengthening Sibley's Future (SSF): Applications are open for the 2025-2026 cohort of SSF. The registration fee is \$499 and the deadline to apply is August 15, 2025. Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by Grams, it was moved to allow any interested employees to apply. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Governance Training: Registration is open for the Stewardship Summit: SWCD Governance and Leadership Essentials course. The registration fee is \$275, hotel rooms cost \$110 per night, and the deadline to register is August 22, 2025. Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by Wiemann, it was moved to allow any interested employees and supervisors to register. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

IT Server Update: A discussion with the Board was led by Wurscher regarding the status of the organization's server. The last server was purchased in November 2017 and was upgraded in May 2021. Recently, a driver was replaced and Riverfront Technology warned that if two drivers failed at the same time, the server would be wiped out. The current server is also nearly at storage capacity. A new server was quoted at \$20,000-\$30,000 and would be under warranty until 2030. Riverfront Technology is in possession of a slightly used server that was quoted at \$13,211 and would be under warranty until 2029. A payment plan of \$367/month for 36 months would be permitted on the 1-year-old server or the option to purchase outright. The Board requested a quote for a new server to compare the options, and a timeline of how urgent the update is. Wurscher will provide these updates at next month's meeting.

Supervisor & Staff Reports: See attached staff reports.

Other Business:

Sibley County Fair: A sign-up sheet was provided for each board member to work a shift at the Sibley County Fair booth. Any remaining shifts will be covered by employees.

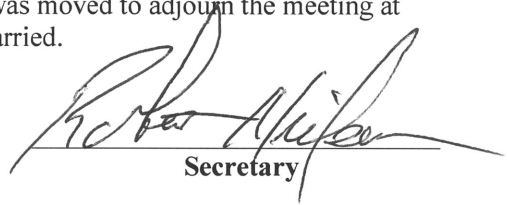
2025 Conservationist of the Year: A discussion was held regarding the candidates for Conservationist of the Year. Upon a motion by Nielsen and seconded by K. Thies, it was moved to honor Keith Hartmann for the 2025 award. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Annual Picnic: The Board determined that the picnic will be held on September 9, 2025, at Sportsman's Park in Arlington. The County Board, High Island Watershed District, and the usual meeting attendees will be invited.

Next Meeting: August 12, 2025, starting at 4:00 p.m., USDA Conference room, located at 112 5th Street, Gaylord, MN.

Adjourn: Upon a motion by K. Thies seconded by Wiemann, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:18 p.m. Ayes Evenson, Wiemann, Nielsen, Grams, K. Thies. Carried.

Approved: August 12, 2025



Secretary