

EXHIBIT A: Meeting Minutes



KANABEC SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

Kanabec SWCD Board Room
2008 Mahogany Street, Suite 3
Mora, MN 55051
(320) 679-1391

Purpose Statement: *This Board of Supervisors meets regularly, utilizing civic standards to organize ourselves and building capacity and infrastructure as needed to support our goals of achieving better soil and water quality outcomes throughout Kanabec County.*

The public is welcome to attend monthly Board meetings in person at the Kanabec SWCD office (address listed above).

Note: Meeting material, including agendas and minutes, is posted on the District website at www.kanabecswcd.org.

Remote Google Meet joining info:

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/qaj-aafx-ruq>

Or dial: (US) +1 505-738-3067 PIN: 922 739 424#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/qaj-aafx-ruq?pin=6566792966442>

April 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order** **9:30 AM**
 - A. **Attendance:**
 - I. **Chair:** Norma Heggernes, **Vice-Chair:** Kevin Belkholm, **Treasurer:** Kim Johnson, Jon Sanford, Gene Carda
 1. Supervisors absent:
 - II. Others Present: Jaren Peplinski, Jerah Mattson, Emily Larsen, Mary Poelman, Nick Foss, Brian Steffen, Peter Ripka
***Remote attendee**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**
3. **Review and Approval of Agenda (Action Item)**
 - A. Sanford moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Johnson.

Affirmative: Belkholm, Sanford, Carda, Heggernes, Johnson
Opposed: None

Motion carried.
4. **Review and Approval of Minutes (Action Item)**
 - A. *Regular Board Meeting Minutes 3/12/2025* ("Regular Meeting Minutes"). Sanford moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Belkholm.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Johnson, Sanford, Carda, Belkholm

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

5. **Reports of Partners**

- A. NRCS (Brian Steffen) – A verbal report was provided. Not much change. Funding is still paused. The state is expected to receive \$20 million in EQIP funding. Staff will wait until the money appears before landowners are notified. Information will be as-needed going forward.
- B. BWSR (Zach Guttormson) – No report was provided.
- C. Kanabec County (Ryan Carda) – No report was provided.
- D. Peter Ripka brought up that a constituent attended a county board meeting. Ripka plans to do a site visit with the constituent to address other concerns.

6. **Public Comment**

- A. None

7. **Financial Report (Action Item)**

- A. *3/31/2025 Year-to-Date Financial Report* (Financial Report). The Financial Report was detailed by Jerah Mattson and reviewed by the Board of Supervisors. Treasurer Johnson recommended acceptance of the Financial Report on behalf of the Finance Committee. Sanford moved to accept the Financial Report. The motion was seconded by Belkholm.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Sanford, Carda

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

- B. Belkholm moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Heggernes.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Sanford, Carda

Opposed: None

8. **Action Items**

- A. *Approval of the Updated Billable Rates.* Johnson moved to approve the updated billable rates resolution. The motion was seconded by Belkholm.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Carda, Sanford

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

- B. *Re-Evaluation Timeline for Remote Work Agreements.* Johnson moved to approve the re-evaluation timeline. The motion was seconded by Heggernes.
Discussion: The structure of the re-evaluation timeline was reiterated by Peplinski: if there are any issues after 6 months, then no further review is needed. If there are issues, remote work agreements will be re-evaluated after 6 months.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: Sanford

Motion carried.

- C. *Proposed Changes to Non-Structural Practice and Flat-Rate Cost Share Payments Policy.* Belkholm moved to approve the Non-Structural Practice and Flat-rate Cost Share Payments Policy. The motion was seconded by Johnson.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Sanford, Carda

Opposed: None

Discussion: BWSR requested modifications to address grant language compliance on agreements, which triggered these proposed changes.

9. **Other Reports/Discussion**

A. *Subcommittee reports*

Personnel Committee. Nothing new to report

Finance Committee. Nothing new to report

Kanabec Coalition of Lake Associations. The meeting was held last week. The fair booth was discussed. Emily will create a sign-up sheet. Fish Lake did not have the carp harvest as planned. Lakes are prepping for weed spraying.

Kettle/Upper St. Croix Watershed Partnership. The last meeting was April 10th. Letters with an update on the plan were sent to other local partners. The group is seeking local partners, asking if they would like to be involved in the plan going forward. The schedule for the rest of the year was made.

Rum River Watershed Partnership. The last meeting was held on March 27th. The next one will be in June. The 2025 budget was finalized. The Isanti Commissioner requested a copy of the letter that was sent to the editor. There was a program that was announced as completed where a drone was used to inventory 2600 parcels on Mille Lacs Lake. Each parcel was scored, and information will be sent out to the high-priority areas.

Snake River Watershed Plan Partnership. The next meeting will be held April 28th at the Kanabec County Jail.

Area III Forestry Association. There was a meeting last month. There was a discussion about forest carbon. DNR attended and is updating their tree nursery. The SFIA Resolution was a big discussion. It is anticipated that the program will be cut significantly. Nothing is official at this time.

TSA Area III Board. The Meeting was held on March 26th. The meeting ended in 23 minutes. 4 people were interviewed for the Area III Technician position. An offer was made but the candidate turned it down. The position will be re-posted. Matias Valerio, TSA Area III Engineer, gave a brief update on site visits and upcoming projects at the TSA board meeting. The next meeting will be held on June 25th.

District Land. There is an issue with the hay land in the prairie areas. It is being suggested not to cut it. This will preserve water quality and habitat. There will be a meeting held discussing the pros and cons of haying the prairie areas. If Belholm is not going to be renting the hay land, a refund will be issued for the rent portion.

MASWCD Area III Annual Meetings Committee. The June meeting agenda is still being drafted. Brian Steffen (NRCS) suggested having Pleasurewoods Farm be on the conservation tour Kanabec SWCD is hosting for Area III SWCDs in the fall, as they were certified in bird grazing planting. The jail has been reserved for this event.

B. *Meeting and Event Announcements*. The annual nitrate clinic will be held next week.

C. *Funding Opportunities*. Peplinski reviewed current and upcoming funding sources.

10. Other Business

A. *Employee Handbook Update*. The attorney's office is understaffed. Peplinski has information from a recent training to connect with an employment law office for drafting and certifying our updated handbook. Belholm requested that Peplinski receive a cost estimate for these services. The personnel committee will discuss further.

B. *Staff Report Discussion*. Projects that are in the making and completed. Notify of any obstacles that staff are having in completing projects. Each staff member will give a verbal update with a 2-minute limit.

- C. Art Contest. Larsen is working on digitizing the photos submitted to be placed on stickers. Lance Strandy has a printing shop - Larsen will follow up with printing shop and gather information on pricing.
- D. RIM Conservation Easements. Mattson reviewed the two new easements approved by the technical committee. She will begin working on the application process and submit to BWSR.
- E. Update on Status/Stipulations on 2025 County Funding. \$20,000 is restricted for non-administrative practices - County has expressed a strong desire to have this \$20,000 dedicated to a specific culvert replacement project.
- F. MASWCD Resolution Idea #1 - Support for Sanitation at Water Access Sites. Sanford will work with Larsen to put this issue into a resolution.
- G. MASWCD Resolution Idea #2 - Support for Innovative Lake Treatments. Poelman will provide information on the current data being conducted and follow up. Belkholm will work on creating the resolution.
- H. MASWCD SFIA Resolution from Koochiching and Aitkin SWCDs. This resolution will oppose potential budget cuts, with the intent to keep this program going as it is currently funded. Sanford moved to approve in support of the MASWCD SFIA Resolution from Koochiching to Aitkin SWCDs. The motion was seconded by Johnson.

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Carda

Opposed: Sanford

Motion carried.

- I. Subcommittees Discussion. Johnson addressed concern over subcommittee reports and expressed a desire to have more clearly defined marching orders for subcommittees, as well as clarity on what deliverables subcommittees are responsible for, asking if there is a structure that can be set up and a process to follow. Peplinski recommends meeting more frequently, noting that having quarterly meetings set up will ensure better communication.

11. Consent Agenda Action Items.

Vegetative Survey and Prescribed Burning on District Land. No burn will be done on the land this spring. The survey will be discussed, and if desired, a survey plan will be developed with a likelihood of vegetative surveys this year during the growing season.

Other items. Staff noted that the no-till drill is booked out for the rest of the month.

Adjournment Carda moved to adjourn at 12:29pm, seconded by Sanford.

12:29 PM

Affirmative: Heggernes, Belkholm, Johnson, Sanford, Carda

Opposed: None

Motion carried.

Submitted by: Jerah Mattson