STEELE COUNTY
Soil and Water Conservation District

235 Cedardale Drive SE
Owatonna MN 55060
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www.steeleswcd.org

The regular monthly meeting of the Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was called to order by Dave Melby at 4:00 PM on Wednesday June 10, 2026 at the Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District, 235 Cedardale Drive SE, Owatonna MN 55060.

SWCD Supervisors Present:	**SWCD Staff Present:**	**Others Present:**	**Absent:**
Mark Ihlenfeld, Secretary	Eric Gulbransen	Jim Smith, NRCS	
Dan Hansen, Vice Chair	Adrienne Gransee	Lezlie Sorensen, NRCS	
Dave Melby, Chairman	Ian Pringle	Leanna Smeby, NRCS	
Mark Ditlevson, PR&I	Alan Krause	Shane Bugeja, BWSR	
Brad Hagen, Treasurer	Adam Arndt		

The June agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The May minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

The May Treasurer's Report was read by Hagen. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Ditlevson, to approve the May Treasurer's Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

Bills: (See attached) Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Hagen, to approve paying the bills. Motion was carried by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – NRCS Local Workgroup – Dodge SWCD – May 20 – Eric Gulbransen and Mark Ditlevson attended this meeting. There was no change in the priority practices for the upcoming year. The meeting had a decent turn out and both Ditlevson and Gulbransen reported being pleased with the guidance that they received. There was also a discussion about how to potentially get more engineering projects funded in the future.

   Resolution Meeting – Stewartville – June 9 – This meeting was attended by Eric Gulbransen, Mark Ditlevson and Mark Ihlenfeld. There were 4 resolutions that will be submitted. The ones that were submitted by Rice and Steele SWCDs will be combined since they were quite similar. Other resolutions that were submitted included one for increased funding for the TSA and one requesting a lower threshold for eligibility for septic repair assistance.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2027 Proposed Budget – Gransee presented a draft of the 2027 budget. There was discussion about the current level of the county allocation and how long it has been since the District requested an increase. The Board wants to have a presentation made to the County board to request an increase in the allocation during the month of July.

2. Conservation Award Winners – The 2026 award winners were discussed and decided on as listed below. Motion to accept the winners as discussed was made by Hansen, seconded by Ditlevson. Motion passed by voice vote.
    - Farmer – Dave/Mark Pfiefer
    - Windbreak – Bill Hartle
    - Wildlife – Jerry Meixner

3. No-till/strip till contract payments – 25-ST-006 - $4,000 – Pringle presented the contract for payment. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Ditlevson, to approve the payment. Motion passed by voice vote.

4. 2026 Tree Results – Pringle presented the 2026 tree result information to the Board. The numbers were similar to 2025 with no unexpected changes.

5. Letter of Support – Southeast MN Groundwater Protection & Soil Health Initiative – Gulbransen presented the letter to the Board and answered questions about the proposed initiative. The Board agreed that it was a worthy cause and the District would send a letter of support.

6. Other – Brad Hagen informed the Board that his last meeting will be in July. He is resigning due to conflicting family obligations.

Agency Reports

Jim Smith, Leanna Smeby and Lezlie Sorensen reported for NRCS. They gave updates on EQIP, CRP and CSP. They also reported on current and potential future projects that are being worked on.

Shane Bugeja reported on two grant programs that are accepting applications He also provided a brief legislative update and told the Board about upcoming listening sessions regarding the One Watershed One Plan program.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen reported on the activity of the county ditches and WCA. He also informed the Board that this will be the final year that we will have the option of participating in the CRP contribution agreement since the Federal funding is ending. Lastly, he informed the Board that Dennis Deml has agreed to fill the board position that will be open with Brad Hagen resigning.

Staff Reports

Alan Krause gave an update on the bus tour that currently has 23 seats remaining. He also updated the Board on the nitrogen trial plots and the planning that he is doing with those farmers involved in that program.

Adam Arndt reported on the preparation that he did for the 4H Agronomy night as well as his involvement with moving and repairing the drills. He also has been assisting in writing CRP plans.

Adrienne Gransee reported on the status of the 2025 financial audit and updated the Board about the Admin training that she will be attending in Walker.

Ian Pringle stated that he has been moving the drill around the county and completing field verifications for the no-till/strip till contracts. In addition, he has been accompanying Eric on ditch calls. He also is working on completing CRP plans.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Ditlevson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Adrienne Gransee

Adrienne Gransee,
Administrative Assistant

June Bills

Cedardale Dev. Co	**June Rent**		**$836.64**
Spectrum	**Internet**		**$89.99**
Cedardale Dev. Co	**Garage Rent**		**$600.00**
MNL	**Native Plants & Seeds**		**$2,243.77**
Chad Billat	**Contract Easement Services**		**$806.00**
Wolcyn	**Trees**		**$20,204.75**
Truax	**Drill parts**		**$349.23**
Elan	**Tree Week Meals**	**$277.74**	
	Agronomy night supplies	**$112.75**	
	Phone	**$89.62**	
	Wix Extended Email	**$29.00**	
	Website Hosting	**$348.00**	
	QuickBooks Payroll Fee	**$67.65**	
	Gas	**$201.37**	**$1,126.13**
		TOTAL	**$26,256.51**