



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 5:00 PM on Wednesday May 14, 2025 at the Steele County SWCD Office, 235 Cedardale Drive SE, Owatonna MN, 55060.

<u>SWCD Supervisors Present:</u>	<u>SWCD Staff Present:</u>	<u>Others Present:</u>	<u>Absent:</u>
Mark Ihlenfeld, Secretary	Eric Gulbransen	Jim Smith, NRCS	Ian Pringle
Dan Hansen, Vice Chair	Adrienne Gransee	Lezlie Sorensen, NRCS	Adam Arndt
Dave Melby, Chairman		Vern Wilker	Alan Krause
Mark Ditlevson, PR&I		Anne Gunness, BWSR	Brad Hagen, Treasurer

The May agenda was reviewed and no changes were made.

The April minutes were distributed to the Supervisors prior to the meeting. Two changes were noted by Dave Melby. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Ditlevson, to approve the minutes with the noted corrections. Motion carried by voice vote.

The April Treasurer’s Report was read by Ihlenfeld. Motion was made by Ditlevson, seconded by Hansen, to approve the April Treasurer’s Report. Motion was carried by voice vote.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – Envirothon – May 6 – Byron Sportsman’s Club – Dan Hansen and Dave Melby volunteered as judges for the oral presentations of this event. They reported that there was a good turnout with 16 teams attending. The oral presentation topic was related climate change mitigation in forestry. Both Hansen and Melby stated that there were some very well prepared presentations with Goodhue standing out.

NRCS Local Work Group meeting – May 14 – Blooming Prairie – Dan Hansen and Dave Melby attended this event to discuss the areas that they would like to see prioritized by NRCS in the upcoming year. The local SWCD’s and NRCS were all represented at the meeting. The uncertainty about future funding was a topic at the meeting in addition to priority practices.

Cannon 1 Watershed 1 Plan meeting – May 7 – Dan Hansen attended this meeting. The annual dues for 2026 were discussed and it was decided to maintain the same levels. There was also more discussion about algae control measures and the Lake Francis management plan that is still in progress.

Area 7 Supervisors Board Meeting – Mark Ihlenfeld attended this meeting. The primary focus of the meeting was to plan for the Area Resolution meeting to be held on June 23rd in Stewartville.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. BWSR Update – Anne Gunness gave the Board an update on the status of the RCPP grant program. The program has not received the official go ahead, but it is looking positive. It is anticipated that funds will be released after the July 1st when the new fiscal year starts. BWSR has trainings coming up to review details of the program and make sure that those who have chosen to be involved are prepared.
2. Computers – Eric Gulbransen and Adam Arndt received new Federal computers. The ones being replaced have been wiped of all government information and are old enough that their value to the District has depreciated to zero. Gulbransen and Arndt asked the Board if there was any objection to them keeping the old computers for personal use rather than disposing of them. No objection was stated by the Board.
3. Promotional Items – Pens & Keychains – Gransee presented samples of the pens and keychains to the Board along with the cost for purchasing 500 of each to use as promotional items at events. The total cost for the purchase will be \$1418.94. Motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the purchase of the pens and keychains. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. Conservation Award Winner Candidates – Gulbransen reminded the Board that the award winners will be chosen at the next meeting and asked them to let us know if there was anyone that they would like to see added to the list for consideration.
5. MAWQCP Profitability Article – Gulbransen gave a brief summary of the article that was included in the Board packet. The overall results of the study showed an increase in gross cash and net income for those who were certified through the MAWQCP program.
6. Winter Camolina Event – St. Peter – June 4 – 10am to 1pm – Gulbransen distributed the information regarding this event to the supervisors.
7. Cover Crop and No-till/Strip till Cost Share Contracts – Gulbransen presented the contracts listed below for approval by the Board. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Hansen, to approve the contracts. Motion passed by voice vote.
 - Cover Crop Contracts – SWCD Funding
 - 25-ST-002, 51.51 Acres, 1 year, \$1,278.75
 - 25-ST-003, 78 Acres, 3 years, \$12,870.00
 - 25-ST-005, 80 Acres, 3 years, \$12,000.00
 - Cover Crop Contracts – 1W1P Funding
 - 25-ST-004, 160 Acres, 1 year, \$8,000.00
 - No-till/Strip till Contract
 - 25-ST-006, 80 Acres, 3 years, \$12,000.00

Agency Reports

Jim Smith and Lezlie Sorensen reported for NRCS. They stated that CRP sign-up is open for a short window ending on June 6. The sign-up is for both new and re-enrolling CRP contracts. Smith stated that they have been verifying and certifying practices and completing controlled burns.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen gave the Board an update on the District's likely involvement with CRP this year, which will include completing status reviews and possibly plans. Al Krause has been collecting the soil samples for nitrate trials. Gulbransen reported on the feedlot project that had been planned. Due to funding being needed elsewhere the project has been delayed but not cancelled. He also spoke about a possible outreach option focused primarily on young farmers.

Adrienne Gransee reported on the beginnings of the website redesign project, as well as the start of planning for the Steele County Free Fair.

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,
Administrative Assistant

May Bills

Cedardale Dev. Co.	May Rent		\$792.00
Spectrum	Internet		\$89.99
Chad Billat	Easements Services		\$2,294.00
Eric Gulbransen	88 miles @ \$0.70		\$61.60
Wolcyn	Trees		\$18,573.30
Schumacher	Trees & Delivery		\$27,101.75
Elan	Gas	\$144.87	
	Envirothon Supplies	\$56.23	
	Phone	\$89.28	
	Field Supplies	\$28.98	
	Monthly QB Payroll	\$30.07	
	Office Supplies	\$325.91	
	Event Display Banner	\$128.05	
	Wix Email	\$29.00	
	Tree Day Supplies	\$17.16	
	Tree Week Food	\$226.78	\$1,076.33
		TOTAL	\$49,988.97