STEELE COUNTY
Soil and Water Conservation District

235 Cedardale Drive SE
Owatonna MN 55060
507-451-6730 Ext. 3
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 4:05 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
Mark Ditlevson, PR&I	Adrienne Gransee	Lezlie Sorensen, NRCS	Brad Hagen, Treasurer
Dave Melby, Chairman	Ian Pringle	Leanna Smeby, NRCS	
	Adam Arndt	Jim Brady, County Commissioner	
		Dennis Deml	

The July agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

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

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

Bills: (See attached) Gransee added SE MASWCD dues to the bill to be approved. Motion was made by Ditlevson, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve paying the bills. Motion was carried by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Meeting Reports – Mark Ditlevson reported on a field day that he and Alan Krause attended in Austin. The primary focus of the meeting was learning more about using kernza in various ways. They had the opportunity to see a variety of test plots. Ditlevson stated that the event was well attended and it was very interesting getting to see the various practices.

   Mark Ditlevson also reported on an event that he attended put on by TJ Kartes. Adam Arndt and Al Krause also attended the event. This event was focused on the progress that has been made so far in an attempt to use kernza to restore a former gravel pit to productive ground. They also had a piece of machinery on display that has been developed specifically to sort the kernza seed from the other debris that is picked up during harvest.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2027 Budget Request for County – Increase to $185,000 Annually – Gransee presented the revised budget to the Board. She also presented the past years financial information that will be presented to the County Board. After discussion between the Board, county commissioner Jim Brady and staff it was decided that the increase was reasonable and to have the budget sent to the county. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Ditlevson. Motion passed by voice vote.

2. Well Water Test Kit Program – Ian Pringle presented the information about the program to the Board. The program will be funded through the Cannon WBIF and anyone with a private well in the watershed will be eligible to participate. Pringle made several inquires and found the most affordable option for the test kits, including complete analysis. There will be 26 kits available.

3. Outstanding Windbreak Award – IT came to the attention of the staff that Bill Hartle was selected as the windbreak winner in 2025. Pringle and Gulbransen began looking at other options and made site visits to those that looked promising. They presented several options to the Board and ultimately Dale McGuire was chosen. Motion was made by Ditlevson, seconded by Ihlenfeld, to approve the selection. Motion carried by voice vote.

4. DNR Well Monitoring Contract – Adam Arndt presented the terms of the contract. There was no change from the 2025 contract. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Ditlevson, to approve the contract. Motion carried by voice vote.

5. Other – Dennis Deml was contacted and agreed to take the open Board position. His first meeting as a Board member will be in August. Motion was made by Ihlenfeld, seconded by Ditlevson, to appoint Deml to the Board. Motion carried by voice vote.

Agency Reports

Jim Smith, Leanna Smeby and Lezlie Sorensen provided an update for NRCS. It was reported that there were 2 more EQIP applications funded. They gave an update on CRP and local project progress. They also gave a brief update about the new team lead.

Jim Brady told the Board that he is not running for reelection so this will be his final yea on the County Board. He also gave a brief update on future and current county projects.

Staff Reports

Eric Gulbransen informed the Board that Chad Billat will be stepping back as the easement specialist and Adam Arndt will be taking over those duties. Billat will be assisting with questions and training during the transition. Gulbransen is continuing to work on 3 active WCA violations. In addition, he will be meeting with contractors about a clean out on CD22. He also reported that ditch spraying is scheduled to begin shortly.

Adam Arndt has been working on CRP plans as well as working with Ian Pringle on drill maintenance. He has also begun to take over the easement responsibilities.

Adrienne Gransee reported on the Admin training in Walker. She also spoke about plans for the Fair booth this year, intending to highlight water testing and well sealing and inform people of the water testing program that the District will be implementing.

Ian Pringle continues to be occupied with drill deliveries and maintenance. He is also working on CRP plans and assisting Eric with WCA and county ditch responsibilities.

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

Respectfully Submitted by,

Adrienne Gransee

Adrienne Gransee,
Administrative Assistant

July Bills

Cedardale Dev. Co	**July Rent**		**$792.00**
Spectrum	**Internet**		**$89.99**
Chad Billat	**Easement Specialist Hours**		**$1,612.00**
Elan	**Gas**	**$246.65**	
	Phone	**$89.62**	
	Meals	**$54.33**	
	Hotel	**$493.66**	
	Drill Parts/Repair	**$200.00**	**$1,084.26**
Adrienne Gransee	**512 Miles @ .725**		**$376.32**
SE MASWCD	**2026 Dues**		**$300.00**
		TOTAL	**$4,254.57**