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OCTOBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm on Thursday, October 16, 2025.

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Shannon Brines, Chair

Maegen Gabriel, Vice-Chair

Hannah Weber, Treasurer

Brandon Henes, Secretary

Patricia Denig, Staff Liaison

Jill Dohner, Associate Board Director

DIRECTORS/STAFF ABSENT

Deborah Shad, Finance Administrator

STAFF/OTHERS PRESENT

Summer Roberts, Executive Director (Virtual)

Danielle Christian, Administrative Assistant

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

N/A

Committee Reports

Finance Committee:

N/A

HR Committee:

Meeting 10/17

Leadership Committee:

Met previous week

Finalized agenda and discussed annual meeting change

MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Gabriel to approve the September meeting minutes. Seconded by Weber.

Vote: 5 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Total Assets	\$1,184,534.54
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$1,184.534.54
Total Monthly Income	\$369,050.29
Total Monthly Expense	\$322,816.78
Total Other Income	\$4,461.99
Total Monthly Net Income	\$50,695.50

Discussion Highlights

End of FY25 discussion

SHIP Grant Bill discussion

WCCD is fiduciary/administrator for cost-share grant

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Motion by Denig to approve payment of bills. Seconded by Gabriel.

Vote: 5 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried

CORRESPONDENCE

EGLE/public review discussion

PUBLIC NOTICES

No discussion

FARMLAND AGREEMENTS & CONSERVATION PLANS

PA-116 discussion

Motion by Henes to accept farmland agreements and conservation plans. Seconded by Weber.

Vote: 5 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried.

STAFF & PARTNER REPORTS

WCCD Executive Director, Summer Roberts

Busy time of year for Admin team. FY25 budget closed out and FY26 budget done. MDARD grant reporting for FY25 completed. 2 meetings per year with MDARD Regional Coordinator to discuss grants. HR Policy updates approved. Staff work agreements in progress. Roberts to draft own work agreement and send to Brines for review at next month's BOD meeting

WCCD Conservation Technician, Matt DeJonge

WCCD Conservation Specialist, Nick Machinski

Educational opportunities @ farms effectiveness discussion

Field day demographic discussion (Paul Buzzard)

Staff reports metrics discussion – demographic questions and need for CRM

WCCD Resource Specialist, Doug Reith

CES hiring process discussion

Development Manager, Megan Phillips Goldenberg

MDARD Regional Coordinator, Nadene Berthiaume

Board Director onboarding discussion

NRCS Representative, Solomon Andrews

MIFarmLink Verbal Update, Jill Dohner

Farm bureau discussion

Opportunity to collaborate at NPEM – Environmental Truck

MIFarmLink Election discussion

General programming discussion

OLD BUSINESS

1. Budget Scenario Updates/Staff Changes (5 min) – Brines/Roberts
 - a. NRCS Position
 - i. NACD-> applications in Nov
 - ii. Knight Foundation -> no updates
 - iii. AMP -> moving forward again
 1. Termination appeal discussion
 2. Government shutdown complication discussion
 3. Brines to contact Rivka for further appeal hearing updates
 - iv. Cooperative Agreement with NRCS
 1. Review Examples from other CDS
 - a. Roberts has not yet heard back from other CDs
2. Training Opportunities (10 mins)-Brines/Gabriel/Denig
 - a. Director Training Recap
 - i. Denig found experience very valuable and educational
 1. Culture and board norms discussion
 - a. Board to revisit norms structure
 - b. MACD rules and regulations around official conversations with elected officials discussion
 - c. Board fiduciary role discussion
 - d. Legislative action day on March 11, 2026 in Lansing board involvement discussion
 - b. MACD Annual Meeting, December 8-10, 2025, Bellaire MI
 - i. Staff attendance discussion
 1. Final attendance decisions not yet made
 2. Roberts considering sending stand-in attendee
 - a. Stand-in possibilities discussion
3. Annual Meeting Vision (10 mins)-All
 - a. Reasoning for change
 - i. No staff to plan January Annual Meeting
 1. Trial change of holding it at NPEM
 2. Discussion around staff lead-will be CES, who will not be sufficiently onboarded by January
 3. Staff feedback discussion
 4. Potential staff/board conversation discussion-tabled until new CES onboarded
 - ii. MLive Article

1. Change encourages community involvement and knowledge of CD
- iii. Potential voting during the week at WFCG (non-govt building)
- iv. Free event with largest draw of people
- v. Past annual meetings-about ½ people left after keynote
- b. At NPEM
 - i. Director Elections
 1. Need to meet state standards
 - ii. Survey
 1. "Place your location star on the map" for attendance data collection
 - iii. Awards
 1. Discussion around recognizing volunteers and farmers in person during annual meeting or holding separate awards ceremony
- c. Main Takeaways from BOD:
 - i. Director Elections are main priority
 - ii. Celebration atmosphere
 - iii. Increase attendance
 - iv. No keynote
 - v. Roberts to check with Resource Specialist about Building A accommodations
 - vi. Further consideration about how/when to present awards

NEW BUSINESS

1. Grant Updates (2 mins)-Roberts
 - a. MDARD FY26 Grants
 - i. Will be emailed to BOD Chair for signature when ready
 1. Brines to send copies to Roberts and Shad when signed documents are completed
 - b. Saline-Macon Grant via RRWC awarded
 - i. We are sub-awardee on Grant. No BOD Chair signature needed
 1. Started in March, process slow. Roberts to forward LOS to Board
 - ii. Final grant document located in google drive
2. BOD Succession Planning (20 mins)-All
 - a. Associate Directors and Committee Members
 - i. Recruitment plan discussion
 - ii. History of Associate Directors
 1. Most ultimately become full elected Board Members
 2. Also allows folks to participate who want flexibility (i.e. snowbirds)
 - iii. Staff succession planning discussion

1. Roberts to request templates/examples from MACD
 - iv. Committee member recruitment and succession plans
 - v. Further discussion tabled for future
 - vi. Board MACD email creation
 1. Roberts and Reith to discuss staff and board email streamlining this winter
 - vii. Board recruitment addition to November newsletter
3. Reserves and Capital Fund Discussion (10 mins)-All
- a. Reserve-6 months operation & 10% cushion
 - b. General-cover payroll and cash flows, reduce moving money back and forth
 - c. Capital-budget for larger strategic goals, like acquiring a demo farm/site
 - i. Dollar amount goal discussion
 1. Reserve - Percentage and regular contribution primary goal
 - a. 1 million dollar goal? 3-5% per year? Shad and Roberts to run scenarios and present to Finance Committee
 2. Current capital asset discussion
 3. Long term land acquisition goals discussion
 4. Friends of WCCD creation-MPG taking charge on 501c3 research, but not priority
 5. Dohner to assist with 501c3 research and land discovery/aquisition
4. Insurance Review (5 mins)-Roberts
- a. Liability Waive
 - i. Historic waiver included in packet
 - ii. Waiver used on FormSite when volunteers sign-up
 - iii. Standardization discussion to be held in HR Committee
 - b. Current Coverages
 - i. Denig had discussions with Joe Fischer
 1. Worker's comp doesn't cover volunteers
 - ii. Denig also spoke with Reith about tool rental program and best practices
 - iii. Roberts to discuss further with HR Committee on 10/17
 - iv. Board coverage discussion
 - v. Tool rental coverage discussion
 - vi. Event attendee coverage discussion

NEXT MEETING:

1. Regular Board Meeting: Thursday, November 20th at 7 p.m.

OATH OF OFFICE

ADJOURNMENT: 9:16 PM

Motion by Gabriel to adjourn. Seconded by Denig.

Vote: 5 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried.

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.

MINUTES APPROVED

APPROVAL SIGNATURE: ____.

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APPROVAL SIGNATURE: *Shirley B.* 11/20/2025