Washtenaw County Conservation District

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SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:01pm on Thursday, September 25, 2025.

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Shannon Brines, Chair

Maegen Gabriel, Vice-Chair

Hannah Weber, Treasurer

Brandon Henes, Secretary

Summer Roberts, Executive Director

DIRECTORS/STAFF ABSENT

Patricia Denig, Staff Liaison

OTHERS PRESENT

Deborah Shad, Finance Administrator

Danielle Christian, Administrative Assistant

Megan Phillips Goldenberg, Development Manager

Solomon Andrews, NRCS

Nadene Berthiaume, MDARD Regional Coordinator

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

N/A

Committee Reports

Finance Committee:

N/A

HR Committee:

Met Friday 09/19

Item in New Business

MEETING MINUTES

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

Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Total Assets	926,550.64
Total Liabilities & Equity	926 ,550.64
Total Monthly Income	33,343.50
Total Monthly Expense	70,975.92
Total Other Income	2,771.57
Total Monthly Net Income	-34,860.85

Discussion Highlights

Last year vs this year-on track

Further discussion in New Business

Farmer Cost Share percentage

Net zero impact

Spend down

Open Purchase order list

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Motion by Weber to approve payment of bills. Seconded by Henes.

Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried

CORRESPONDENCE

MACD collaborative grant discussion

PUBLIC NOTICES

None

FARMLAND AGREEMENTS & CONSERVATION PLANS

PA-116 Application discussion

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

Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried.

STAFF & PARTNER REPORTS

WCCD Executive Director, Summer Roberts (none for August)

WCCD Conservation Technician, Matt DeJonge

WCCD Conservation Specialist, Nick Machinski

WCCD Resource Specialist, Doug Reith

- Liability insurance discussion for tool rental, large events, and activities with kids. Consider drafting best practices policy. Review to go on future agenda.

Development Manager, Megan Phillips Goldenberg

MiFarmLink Specialist, Jill Dohner

MDARD Regional Coordinator, Nadene Berthiaume

- Director Trainings
- State Budget
- Potential shutdown discussion – funding shouldn't impact this year of FY26; CTAP is funded by Freshwater Fund which renews in Dec

NRCS Representative, Solomon Andrews

- CSP and EQIP have been obligated

- Process of certifying individuals who have completed applications underway
- No updated information on potential shutdown
- No longer opening office in Detroit
- Cooperative agreement discussion
    - FY26 agreement creation priority for NRCS
    - Follow up discussion on agreement
    - Need budget narrative from WCCD

OLD BUSINESS

1. Budget Scenario Updates/Staff Changes (10 min) – Brines
    a. NRCS Position
        i. Cooperative agreement discussion
        ii. Looking at three month gap
            1. Kristen not expected to work on NRCS business during that time, but will keep LincPass active
    b. NACD
        i. Webinar on TA grant application
        ii. Application due in November; Potential award in February/March
    c. Knight Foundation
        i. No updates
    d. AMP
        i. Moving forward again
        ii. Going out for signature soon
2. Ann Arbor's Farmers Market Inspection Opportunity (1 min) – Brines
    a. No longer available – internalizing position
3. Personnel Policy Revisions (5 min) – Roberts
    a. BOD Resolution
        i. Bonus Compensation Policy
            1. Bonus types and structures
            2. Funding pool
            3. Part time vs Full time – consider pro-rating using hours worked in a year
            4. Tenure table
            5. Tabled for further discussion during new business
        ii. Health Insurance Policy
            1. Part-time staff have option to purchase CD health care
            2. CD may elect to offer COBRA
                a. Current insurance coverage discussion
                    i. Excellent for single people, but costly for families
    b. Long-term Volunteer Agreement
4. PA116 Withdrawal Update (15 min) – Brines
    a. Wilkin Estate
    b. Feldkamp Siblings, LLC
    c. Saline Township land use decisions
        i. Re-zone denied
        ii. Lawsuit brought by family and developer
            1. Discussion on township advisement and/or letter of support

5. Upcoming Opportunities (5 min) – Brines
    a. Region 10 Meeting, September 22, 2025
    b. MACD BOD Training in Jackson County, September 22, 5-8pm and 23 10am3pm, 2025; $75/person. Scholarships available through MACD
        i. Retention schedule and compliance discussion
    c. MACD Annual Meeting, December 8-10, 2025, Bellaire MI

NEW BUSINESS

6. Farmer Programs Update (10 min) – Goldenberg
    a. CTAP Field Day Report (Gateway)
        i. Brainstorming for next year
        ii. Alternate - traditional farm and organic
        iii. Farmer Listening Session
    b. Formalizing partnership with The Tree Lab (15 min) – Goldenberg
        i. Seeking fiduciary partnership
        ii. 501c(3) vs government agency discussion
            1. In conversations with MACD directly
            2. Discussion on policies regarding working with children
                a. Legal counsel review
                b. Carry over conversation into October
            3. MPG to lead draft MOU
7. FY25 Budget Amendment (10 min) - Shad/Roberts
    a. Surplus discussion
        i. FY25 plans derailed due to Federal funding uncertainty; Staff delayed initiatives and plans
            1. Increase in sponsorship, donations, and millage
            2. Decrease in Administrative expenses
            3. Decrease in personnel costs – reduction in hours, loss of staff, loss of benefits
            4. Decrease in contractor costs – delayed trainings, etc.
        ii. Reserves discussion
            1. Closer look at reserves goal – at least 6 months of operating costs, plus 10% cushion recommended by FC
        iii. Revisiting of bonus discussion
            1. Remaining surplus discussion
                a. Surplus priorities set
                b. Continued discussion of remaining surplus at October meeting

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-004 detailing the Bonus Compensation Policy and the Health Insurance Benefit Policy: Moved by Weber, seconded by Gabriel. Roll Call Vote: Weber, yay, Gabriel, yay, Henes, yay, Brines, yay, 1 absence, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Motion to Adopt FY25 Q4 Amendment as presented and detailed with the addition that the surplus be used to ensure the Reserve fund has 6-months of operating expenses and 10% cushion and the remainder be moved into the General Fund. Moved by Gabriel,

seconded by Weber. Roll call vote: Gabriel, yay, Weber, yay, Henes, yay, Brines, yay, 1 absence, 0 nays. Motion carried.

8. FY26 Budget Hearing (15 min) - Shad/Roberts
    a. Clarification of Stores in budget
    b. Cost of living increase discussion
    c. Director stipend increase discussion – Roberts to ask MDARD
    d. Lease renewal discussion
    e. Insurance costs discussion
    f. No public comments on FY26 budget
    g. As BOD requested, interest income not used to balance budget

Motion to adopt the General Appropriations Act Amendment for FY26 Sections 1–13. Moved by Weber, supported by Henes. Roll Call Vote: Gabriel, yay, Weber, yay, Henes, yay, Brines, yay, 1 absent, 0 nays. Motion carried.

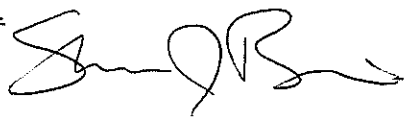
NEXT MEETING:

1. Regular Board Meeting: Thursday, October 16th at 7 p.m.

OATH OF OFFICE

ADJOURNMENT: 9:53 PM

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.

MINUTES APPROVED 10/16/25

APPROVAL SIGNATURE: