



## APRIL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:01pm on Thursday, April 17th, 2025.

### **DIRECTORS PRESENT**

Shannon Brines, Chair  
Maegen Gabriel, Vice-Chair  
Hannah Weber, Treasurer  
Patricia Denig, Staff Liaison  
Brandon Henes, Secretary

### **DIRECTORS ABSENT**

None.

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Deborah Shad, Finance Administrator (virtual)  
Summer Roberts, Executive Director  
Brenda Baker, Resident (virtual)

### **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

Maternity Leave, moved up under old business to item no. 1, bullet point 3.

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**Gabriel motions to approve the March meeting minutes, Weber seconds. 5 yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Finance Committee:**

- N/A

#### **HR Committee:**

- Met 2 weeks prior, next meeting scheduled for last week of April.
- More to be discussed later in agenda
- Discussion surrounding nominations for new members.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Total Assets	\$1,070,821.73
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$1,070,821.73
Total Monthly Income	\$212,522.49
Total Monthly Expense	\$82,696.93
Total Other Income	\$2,511.45
Total Monthly Net Income	\$132,337.01

### **Discussion**

- WexBank discussion and definition (gas card)
  - \$0 balance after being paid, nothing outstanding
- Current month compared to same month in FY24: Grant income low, spring sale income high (related to time of year)
- Budgeting is on track

## **APPROVAL OF BILLS**

### **Discussion**

- Gabridge performed FY24 Audit – Discussion of price range and timing for asking for future bids

**Gabriel motions to approve bills, Denig seconds. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**

## **FARMLAND AGREEMENTS & CONSERVATION PLANS**

### **EGLE notifications**

### **Discussion on farmland agreements**

**Gabriel motions to approve farmland agreements and conservation plans, Weber seconds. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**

## **STAFF & PARTNER REPORTS**

### **WCCD Executive Director, Summer Roberts**

- Navigating federal funding pause
- Meeting with staff on grant implementation/reporting, MPG new position and running point on EGLE SHIP grant
- Audit wrap-up
- Reviews for CTAP and CS with MDARD
- FOIA completion
  - Billed at Molly's hourly rate

- Several conservation districts received FOIA's

WCCD Resource Coordinator, Doug Reith

- New seasonal hire, Walker Whitehouse

WCCD Conservation Technician, Matt DeJonge

- Doing well moving into new position as community forester
- Roberts to schedule for future BOD presentation on SCHG overview

WCCD Conservation Specialist, Nick Machinski

MCSFP Specialist, Megan Phillips Goldenberg

MiFarmLink Specialist, Jill Dohner

MDARD Regional Coordinator, Nadene Berthiaume

NRCS Representative, Solomon Andrews

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. Budget Scenario Updates/Staff Changes (10 min)

a. TOPP

i. Leave of Absence starting 04/07/2025 until 05/04/2025

1. BOD approval of extension if necessary? Awaiting subawardee contract from MSUE

**Motion by Denig to allow the Executive Director discretion to extend leave of absence for TOPP Technicians by two, 30-day increments as needed and to determine whether "leave of absence" or "layoff" was most appropriate for situation, seconded by Gabriel. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**

ii. Michigan Climate Smart Farms Project (MCSFP)

1. USDA sent notice of intent to terminate
2. Opportunity to reapply via AMP TBD per MACD, staff, partners; legal discussion regarding close-out.

b. Community Engagement Specialist

i. Hiring Process Exception

ii. Anna doing well - would like to continue in this position

**Weber motions to support ED in officially hiring Anna Cone into new position as Community Engagement Specialist, seconded by Henes. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**

c. Maternity Leave Plan (10 min)

- i. MPG willing to take extra hours to help cover ED maternity leave.
    - 1. Deb, MPG, EA, and Patricia Denig to help
  - ii. Further discussion during May meeting
- 2. County MOU for Millage (2 min)
  - a. Has been signed
  - b. Executive Director and Finance Administrator will submit a report ASAP
- 3. Newaygo Nursery (2 min)
  - a. Holding pattern, haven't heard back yet
- 4. HR Policies Review (20 min)
  - a. Sick Leave
    - i. More than in compliance with the MI ESTA, but trying to make more equitable among employees
      - 1. Difficulties adding fraction of sick time accrued for part-time employees in PayChex system
      - 2. Take a break on this to prioritize other tasks/issues
    - ii. Discussion regarding how employees can use sick time
  - b. Retirement/Deferred Compensation - take effect with move to MERS
    - i. Impact of Partial Plan Termination rules? – Roberts to follow-up with HR Committee
    - ii. Employer match and vesting schedule discussion

**motions to approve Sick Leave Policy revisions and Deferred Compensation Policy, which will take effect upon the transition to MERS, seconded by. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**
- 5. FY24 Audit (10 min)
  - a. Review and Approve
  - b. Discussion surrounding how to streamline/improve audit process in the future
  - c. **Gabriel motions to adopt Resolution No. 2025-003, Denig seconds. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. Letters of Support (5 min)
  - a. GLRI Letter
  - b. ED opportunities to make decisions regarding signatures for things like this in the interest of preserving relationships and grant fundings without board approval
    - i. Bringing these things to leadership committee versus needing full board approval
- 2. Farm Bureau Meeting Review (10 min)
  - a. Good experience for those in attendance
  - b. Opportunities to connect with generational farmers
  - c. Invitation to attend/speak at each other's annual meetings
  - d. WCCD invited Farm Bureau to help sponsor the NPEM and to bring their mobile classroom
  - e. Follow-up meeting fall/winter
- 3. MDARD OPS – BOD Governance Element Review (15 min)
  - a. Review and introduction

- b. To be revisited at next board meeting
- 4. Tree Sale Overview - volunteers (2 min)
  - a. Tree sale going well- busy time
  - b. Invite Board of Directors to events in advance – digital calendar invites preferred
- 5. MACD Conference (2 min)
  - a. December 7-10, 2025 at Shanty Creek in Bellaire, MI

NEXT MEETING: Monthly Board Meeting: Thursday, May 15th at 7:00pm.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

**ADJOURNMENT**: 9:29pm.

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.

MINUTES APPROVED

APPROVAL SIGNATURE: \_