



Washtenaw County
Conservation District

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FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:00pm on Thursday, February 20th, 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
Nadene Berthiaume, MACD Director (virtual)
Solomon Andrews, NRCS

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None.

MEETING MINUTES

Gabriel motions to approve the January regular & February Special meeting minutes, Denig seconds. 5 yays, no nays, no further discussion. Motion passes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee:

- None.

HR Committee:

- To be discussed later in agenda, next meeting to be scheduled. Jennifer Watson and Matt Nolan stepped down from HR Board, so need new members.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Total Assets	\$722,447.70
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$722,447.70
Total Monthly Income	\$304,664.16
Total Monthly Expense	\$466,917.15
Total Other Income	\$8,026.50
Total Monthly Net Income	\$154,230.46

Discussion

Payment from MOSA TOPP came in for Q1FY25 (Oct-Dec).

Sponsorship discussion for Native Plant Expo and Marketplace.

Discussion regarding discrepancy of millage figures on Profit and Loss.

Discussion on net operating income figures in budget.

Discussion regarding incoming millage dollars in March.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Gabriel moves to approve the tree sale purchase, Weber seconds. All yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.

FARMLAND AGREEMENTS & CONSERVATION PLANS

Discussion on PA116's and the board's role.

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

STAFF & PARTNER REPORTS

WCCD Executive Director, Summer Roberts

- HR policies reviewed by legal; Next to be incorporated into Manual
- Community engagement specialist job - postponed
- EGLE GLRI SHIP cost-share grant is on track
- Jill Dohner to attend March board meeting to discuss transition for MIFarmLink

WCCD Resource Coordinator, Doug Reith

WCCD Conservation Technician, Matt DeJonge

WCCD MAEAP Technician, Nick Machinski

MCSFP Specialist, Megan Phillips Goldenberg

MiFarmLink Specialist, Jill Dohner

- Discussion regarding connecting with the Farm Bureau. Board members discussed attending meetings to show support.

MDARD Regional Coordinator, Nadene Berthiaume

- Introduction to new board members.
- Discussion of dates for legislative action day and the fall MACD conference.
- Discussion regarding upcoming educational opportunities for board members.
- Discussion of funding opportunities.
- CTAP manager stepped down, and they are looking to fill the position.
- Nadene Berthiaume left at 9:16pm

NRCS Representative, Solomon Andrews

- Introduction to new board members.
- EQIP and CSP application process.
- Conservation plans the last two months have been active.
- Adjustments made to compensate for new legislation and preparations.
- Solomon Andrews left at 7:38pm.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Budget Scenarios (30 min)

a. Staff/Grant Changes

- i. Anna Cone and Paul Buzzard moved to temporary positions (Outreach Coordinator and MAEAP Technician, respectively) due to Federal funding pauses triggered by the new Administration. These temporary positions are currently open-ended to be as fluid as possible in case Federal funding resumes.
- ii. Starting 2/24/2025, Megan Phillips-Goldenberg's position will change to a part-time (20 hr/week) position of grant administrator.
 1. USDA grant has not yet been officially discontinued.
- iii. Begun discussing filling the executive assistant position in June, 2025.
- iv. Potential TOPP MSU MOU
 1. WCCD would be sub-awardee, MSU can tolerate turbulent cash flow. Reporting to MSU, doesn't change the position, just funding details. MOSA & MSU discussion on MOU

details for 10% 1st quarter fee of \$2,500, requesting to add to indirect funds from MOSA.

- v. Leave of Absence Language
 - 1. Timeline, resignation, and return work discussion and finalizations. Megan Phillips-Goldenberg to be hired into new position and take vacation time.
 - 2. **Gabriel motions to support Leave of Absence agreement with the following amendments: Section 5, "Resignation/Termination" should have 7 calendar days notice and ED has discretion on when to start 30 day leave of absence period, Denig supports. All in favor, 5 yays, no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**
- 2. County MOU for Millage (10 min)
 - a. Uncertain about language in email, Summer Roberts to follow up via phone call to confirm reporting will be in WCCD's FY.
- 3. MERS Retirement (15 min)
 - a. MERS has worked well per Patricia Denig's report and experiences with staff pension.
 - b. Only full-time WCCD employees currently have 403(b) through Nationwide; MERS would utilize 457(b).
 - c. Would not impact the budget.
 - d. Discussion about:
 - i. IRS guidelines.
 - ii. Vested period and withdrawal of funds
 - 1. Consideration of impacts from budget amendments, position changes, match requirement and cap, and grant funded staff.
- 4. MACD Capital Day - March 20th (5 min)
 - a. Overview for new board members. Gabriel and Roberts will attend. Roberts will ask additional staff to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Officer Elections (10 min)
 - a. Nominations and overview of positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Staff Liaison)
 - i. Shannon Brines to be Chair; nomination and acceptance
 - ii. Maegen Gabriel to be Vice-Chair; nomination and acceptance
 - iii. Hannah Weber to be Treasurer; nomination and acceptance
 - iv. Patricia Denig to be Staff Liaison; nomination and acceptance

1. Roberts to add this role as official in the resolution
 - v. Brandon Henes to be Secretary; nomination and acceptance
 - b. Brines motions to adopt Resolution No. 2025-002, Denig seconds. 5 yays no nays, no questions or further discussion. Motion passes.**
 - i. Roberts to update/save Resolution No. 2025-002 to the file system.
2. UCF Grant Memo (5 min)
 - a. IRA grant with City of Ypsilanti for community engagement/urban forestry.
 - b. Grant would contribute to Matt DeJonge & Deborah Shad's salaries.
3. Great Lakes TCGM Grant Application (5 min)
 - a. Short turnaround period, may not be funded due to new Executive Orders surrounding federal grant funds and DEI.
4. EGLE OSN Grant Memo (5 min)
 - a. Nicholas Machinski is pursuing this grant.
 - b. 3 year grant for approximately \$409,000.
 - c. Roberts to update grant memo with tentative grant start date and funding source.
5. FY25 Q1 Budget Amendment (15 min)
 - a. Handwritten notes on board packets to include \$7,026.22 of Interest Income to balance budget (accounting principle)
 - b. Memorandum Discussion
 - c. Weber motions to approve budget amendment with \$7,026.22 of Interest Income included to balance budget to \$0.00, Gabriel seconds. All yays no nays for budget amendments.**
6. Newwaygo Tree Nursery (15 min)
 - a. Newwaygo discussion: Board emailed that nursery is no longer viable; cashflow and staffing issues; asked for other CDs interest to assist
 - b. Newwaygo has been mostly natives, but lack of fruit tree suppliers in mid-west, especially MI
 - c. City of Ann Arbor is exploring a city run nursery and has grant funding for an exploratory review; WCCD staff are supporting/advising
 - d. Brines to follow-up with Gabriel and Reith to learn more about potential options with respect to Newwaygo
7. 2024 Audit (5 min)
 - a. Some board members received emailed Fraud Questionnaire from Andrew Wilcoxon at Gabridge
 - i. Discussion: questions about email and policy discussion and protocol for such situations.
 - ii. Board referred to handbook to answer specific policy questions and review internal control procedures
 - iii. Due Friday, February 28th.

NEXT MEETING:

Monthly Board Meeting: Thursday, March 13th at 7:00pm.

OATH OF OFFICE

ADJOURNMENT: 9:46pm.

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.

MINUTES APPROVED 3/13/25

APPROVAL SIGNATURE: _

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shirley B.", written over the line for the approval signature.