Washtenaw County Conservation District

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OCTOBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm on Thursday, October 22, 2026.

DIRECTORS PRESENT
Shannon Brines, Chair
Jill Dohner, Vice Chair
Maegen Gabriel, Treasurer
Patricia Denig, Staff Liaison
Susan Morley LaCroix, Associate Director

DIRECTORS/STAFF ABSENT
Brandan Henes, Board Secretary

STAFF/OTHERS PRESENT
Joy Casnovsky, Executive Director
Solomon Andrews, NRCS – joined at 6:31 p.m.
Alison Bressler, UM – joined at 7:53 p.m.
Michael Miller - Virtual

OATH OF OFFICE: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:
Brines moved to add addition of MACD – dues and to discuss MACD reimbursement polices under New Business #3.
Motion by Dohner to approve the edited Agenda. Seconded by Denig.
Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried.

MEETING MINUTES
Motion by Denig to approve the September meeting minutes with the correction that Associate Director Susan Morley LaCroix was noted as Virtual not Absent. Seconded by Gabriel.
Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee (Casnovsky): A long-standing committee member has asked to step down so they will be looking for a replacement in the future.

HR Committee (Denig): Met 10/2/26 – they are working to finalize the leave of absence policy, may be adding an additional member to the committee, talked about employee development plans, general policy and handbook overhaul and briefly discussed the compensation study. Next meeting is the beginning of November.

Leadership Committee (Brines): Met 10/13/26 to set current BOD meeting Agenda.

Farmer Committee (Dohner): Working on a Famer Committee application. Date of 11/2/26 for first farmer committee meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

As of August 31, 2026

Total Assets	$1,090,172.69
Total Liabilities & Equity	$1,090,172.69
Total Monthly Income	$35,821.33
Total Monthly Expense	$101,836.96
Total Monthly Other Income	$2,781.06
Total Monthly Net Income	$-63,229.57

August 2026 financial reports were read by Gabriel. September 2026 financial reports will be available soon.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Motion by Denig to approve payment of bills. Seconded by Dohner. Denig amends to pay the bills in the amount of $200,293.31 as summarized.
Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.
Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC NOTICE

- EGLE – install a stormwater outfall structure that will discharge treated stormwater into wetland as part of the development of a commercial lot. Section 20, Northfield Township.
- EGLE – after-the-fact permit for placing a driveway through 625ft of wetland. Section 13, Lyndon Township

FARMLAND AGREEMENTS & CONSERVATION PLANS

None

STAFF & PARTNER REPORTS

Executive Director – Joy Casnovsky
Conservation Specialist – Nick Machinski
Resource Specialist - Doug Reith
Development Manager - Megan Phillips Goldenberg (no report)

Community Forester - Matt DeJonge
Farmer Programs Specialist – Alex Cacciari
Community Engagement Specialist – Jill Lada
NRCS District Conservationist – Solomon Andrews- in person, joined at 6:31pm. Provided an overview of the NRCS and how they work within the community.
Washtenaw County Farm Bureau - Sue Rodgers (no report)
Produce Safety Technician, Genesee CD – Micah Thibideau-Williams
MDARD Regional Coordinator- Nadene Berthiaume
MACD September Update – Kel Anders

NEW BUSINESS

1. Financial Operations Update by Casnovsky – FY26 grant reporting is completed. Maner and Resilient Bookkeeping are working to clean up the financial systems. Health insurance benefits go into effect on 10/1/26. Ancillary benefits go into effect on 11/1/26. Plan moving forward is to coordinate open enrollments for all benefits to start 11/1/27. Auditors will begin 1/11/27. Looking into more efficient billing system. Determine bookkeeping/financial human resource needs.

   Motion by Brines to add discussion of yearly celebrations to New Business. Seconded by Dohner. 4 yay. 0 nays. Motion carried.

2. Yearly Celebration – Need to reassess audio. Important to keep awards and celebration of staff. Board agreed that the style of last year's event is preferable to previous years.
3. MACD Annual Conference recap – The Conference was well organized with many great presentation offerings. Some presentations will be available online – access info to come. Denig noted it was nice to see legislators there and to make sure our legislators are invited to our events and send congratulations to them after elections. Discussion on Enviro-thon for Washtenaw County.
   a. Reimbursement policy – need an official policy for conferences. Google has a MACD reimbursement form. New board members should provide ACH information.
   b. MACD Dues – Premium level is $1,300.00/yr. Advocacy campaign for a lobbyist to be employed by MACD – suggested donation is $500.

      Motion by Denig to add $500 to payment of dues for donation. Gabriel made a friendly amendment to increase to $700. Dohner seconded. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. Motion carried.

4. Grant/MOU Updates
   a. Pending Notice
      i. USDA NIFA Specialty Crop Research Initiative Grant – no updates
      ii. NACD TA – has been moved to two years.
      iii. EGLE/EPA MyFarms (Bressler): met with EPA in September. We asked for a min of $75,000 for indirect costs which is a 15% indirect cost rate on the entire grant if we participated in the inorganic fertilizer grant. We need to provide EGLE the cost associated with a federal audit and why more money is needed for indirect costs.

The grant will start in the spring of 2027. It is an 18-month grant, and our staff will start their involvement approximately October 2027.

NEXT MEETING

1. Regular Board Meeting: Thursday, November 19th at 6 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:14
Motion by Gabriel to adjourn. Seconded by Dohner.
Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.
Motion carried.

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.
MINUTES APPROVED 11/19/26
APPROVAL SIGNATURE_____

81,677.63
21,600.85
match

165,
41,859