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JULY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm on Thursday, July 23, 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

Brandon Henes, Secretary

STAFF/OTHERS PRESENT

Shazia Ansari, Finance Administrator
Megan Phillips Goldenberg, Development Manager
Emily Wagner, Administrative Assistant (taking minutes)
Robin Pott
Alison Bressler

Executive Director Candidate Presentations and Discussion

After both finalist candidates finished presenting and answering Board follow-up questions, the Board had a thoughtful discussion on the merits of both candidates. After discussion, Dohner moved and Gabriel supported that Denig offer the position of Executive Director to Joy Casnovsky. Denig asked for clarification on the parameters of the offer and a friendly amendment to the motion to offer up to the top of the posted salary range along with five additional vacation days was moved by Dohner and supported by Gabriel.

Additions to Agenda:

Denig recommended future meetings have a consent agenda re: staff reports.

OATH OF OFFICE: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee (Gabriel): Setting new schedule TBD.

HR Committee (Denig): July meeting cancelled. Follow-up question on updating Holiday policy to include weekdays between Christmas and New Years for August meeting. Also provided update on Compensation and Classification Study still on hold and will not be completed in time for FY 2027 budget discussion.

Leadership Committee (Brines): Leadership Committee met July 13th to set agenda for Board meeting.

Farmer Committee (Gabriel): Sub-committee meeting scheduled for August 5, 2026, with Dohner and Nick Machinski

MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Dohner to approve the June meeting minutes. Seconded by Denig.

Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.

No discussion.

Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

As of June 30, 2026

Total Assets	\$1,392,467.86
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$1,392,467.86
Total Monthly Income	\$326,149
Total Monthly Expense	\$327,461
Total Monthly Other Income	\$3,185
Total Monthly Net Income	\$900

Finance Top Priorities

- 1. Budget Fiscal Year 2027** Finance has successfully launched FY27 budget process with key timelines.
- 2. Five D Optimization & Compliance Framework** Finance has been working on two high priority initiatives that include an extensive internal audit of historical financial statements and month-end closing process.
- 3. New PTO policies** Two PTO (holiday time and sick time) policies approved by the BOD in June 2026 have been implemented.
- 4. WCCD Policy Paper: Cost Allocation Policy, Master Fringe Load Percentage, MTDC Base, Governance & Approval** Finance has developed the complete methodology and principles internally rather than outsourcing, and will have Maner Costerisan review prior to bringing to Board
Finance requests a Special Meeting of the BOD to review and consider for approval. Set for August 13, 2026 @ 5:00 pm
Motion by Denig to approve. Seconded by Dohner. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.
- 5. Shopify, Stripe & A2X** Finance has made the board aware that Finance may leverage Finance's engagement with Maner Costerisan to update and finalize product mapping across these platforms.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

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

Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.

No discussion.

Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

- ECO-UM sustainability consulting club at the University of Michigan reached out to explore the possibility of partnering with WCCD.

PUBLIC NOTICES

- None

FARMLAND AGREEMENTS & CONSERVATION PLANS

- No Farmland Agreements/PA116s

STAFF & PARTNER REPORTS

Conservation Specialist - Nick Machinski

Resource Specialist - Doug Reith

Development Manager - Megan Phillips Goldenberg

Community Forester - Matt DeJonge

Community Engagement Specialist – Jill Lada

Washtenaw County Farm Bureau - Sue Rodgers (no report)

Produce Safety Technician, Genesee CD – Micah Hutchinson

MDARD Regional Coordinator- Nadene Berthiaume

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Finance Administrator (20 min) - Ansari/Gabriel

a. Audit Engagement FY 2026 - *Motion to approve the engagement of Gabridge and Company for the fiscal year 2026 financial audit and authorize Board Chair to sign the Audit Engagement Letter on behalf of the Board of Directors. Motion by Dohner to approve. Seconded by Gabiel. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried. Ansari to sign as management.*

b. Maner Costerisan Engagement Approval - *Motion to approve the engagement for Paychex Timekeeping Setup, Labor Distribution integration, and employee training for an estimated initial cost of \$1,300 to \$1,500 plus hourly training costs and authorize the [Executive Director / Board Chair] to sign the final engagement letter. Motion by Dohner to Approve. Seconded by Gabriel. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.*

c. Monthly Closing and Financial Reports Approval - *Motion to approve the engagement for external accounting support—including Trial Balance adjustments, FY2026 YTD reconciliations, and Q4 monthly reviews—and authorize the Board Chair to execute the formal engagement letter. (If additional funds are needed, that will be up for approval at a future meeting). Motion by Gabriel to approve. Seconded by Denig. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.*

d. Soft Closing and Hard Closing Memo FY 2026 - **Postponed**

e. Forest to MI Faucet Contract Amendment – *Motion to approve and authorize the execution of this Memorandum of Agreement amendment to ensure proper financial alignment and compliance for the Forest to Mi Faucet grant project.* **Motion by Denig to approve. Seconded by Dohner. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.**

2. Grant/MOU Updates (10 min) - Brines/Goldenberg

a. Upcoming grants, applications in development

i. MDARD RFNG, CS, OP

1. Phillips Goldenberg gave verbal updates.

b. Submitted Letters of Interest, Pending Invitation to Submit Full Proposal

i. USDA NIFA Specialty Crop Research Initiative Grant (MSU)

c. Grant applications for BOD approval

i. None

d. Pending Notice

i. USDA BFRDP

ii. NACD TA – being reviewed

iii. MDARD CTAP

iv. EGLE/EPA MyFarms Digital Adoption

e. Grants/MOU for BOD Signature

i. SARE- Michigan First Generation Farm Mentors

1. *Motion to approve WCCD's acceptance of the NC-SARE subaward/fee-for-service agreement for "Michigan First-Generation Farm Mentors" (\$14,000, October 2026 – March 2028).* **Motion by Dohner to approve. Seconded by Denig. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.**

2. *Motion to authorize Board Chair Shannon Brines to execute the MOU/agreement with Michigan State University on WCCD's behalf when it arrives, without additional board discussion.* **Motion by Gabriel to approve. Seconded by Denig. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.**

3. *Motion to provide guidance on wage/admin fee split. The default administrative rate is 15%, resulting in \$2,100 in indirect for WCCD and \$11,900 in wages + taxes for an employee over an 18-month period.*

Phillips Goldenberg mentioned that amount wouldn't cover all administrative costs and remainder would need to be covered by millage. Denig reminded that part of the role of the WCCD is our impact on the community. The cost/benefit analysis to our community is worth it. **Motion by Gabriel to approve. Seconded by Denig. Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays. No discussion. Motion carried.**

f. Received in FY26 & uploaded to Google Drive

i. MDARD FY26 Grants: OPS, CS, CTAP, RAP, RFNG

ii. EGLE OSN

iii. Ag Plastic MOU

iv. Saline-Macon (subawardee of RRWC). County MOU Ag Tire Drive

3. New Associate Director candidate will be invited to the August meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

1. **Special Board Meeting: Thursday, August 13, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.**

2. Regular Board Meeting: Thursday, August 27th at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:15 PM

Motion by Denig to adjourn. Seconded by Dohner.

Vote: 4 yays, 0 nays.

Motion carried.

THESE MINUTES STAND TO BE APPROVED.

MINUTES APPROVED

APPROVAL SIGNATURE: _____

ADJOURNMENT