



629 NORTH 11TH STREET
COURTHOUSE SUITE 7
MONTEVIDEO, MN 56265

PHONE: 320-269-2696

**Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District
Regular Board Meeting
December 9, 2024**

Minutes of the Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District, 629 N 11th St., Suite 7, Montevideo, MN 56265.

1. Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Calin Eisenlohr at 11:30 a.m.
 1. Members present: Steve Jacobson, Jerry Schwitters, Calin Eisenlohr, Aaron Ahrenholz
 2. Others present: SWCD Staff- Zach Bothun, Desirae Jarett, Tom Sletta; Senator Andrew Lang, Representative Elect Scott Van Binsbergen; BWSR BC: Luke Olson; NRCS Staff: Nathan Stewart and Mike Timmerman; Land & Resource Staff: JoAnn Blomme; Conservationists of the Year Larry and Gage Halvorson
2. Introductions were given around the room.
3. Chippewa SWCD gave a presentation on 2024 Highlights.
4. On behalf of the board, District Manager Zach Bothun, presented Chippewa SWCD's 2024 Conservationists' of the Year, Larry and Gage Halvorson of Halvorson Management, Inc.
5. Luke Olson, BWSR Board Conservationist, gave an update about RCPP Implementation Funding, what it can be used for, and the types of duties will be required due to it being federal funded. Luke also talked about "Turn Key" drainage management program/system.
6. Senator Andrew Lang gave a legislative update on election race results and what that will mean going forward. Sen. Lang talked about a predicted deficit for 2026-2027 that will likely lead to reduced funding and/or raised taxes. Sen. Lang talked about how unnerving it is that there has been a consistent loss in individual income tax as well as business tax. Senator Lang also noted that he encourages use of Lessard-Sam funding opportunities. Representative Elect Van Binsbergen discussed what his goals are as he takes office. He also talked about the important of rural Minnesota and agriculture.
7. M/S/P Jacobson, Ahrenholz approve the agenda with additions. All in favor.
8. M/S/P Schwitters, Jacobson approve the November meeting minutes. All in favor.
9. Bills were presented for ratification and payment.
10. **Action Items:**
 1. Zach presented the Chippewa River Watershed Association (CRWA) Sub Grant Implementation Agreement.
 - M/S/P Jacobson, Ahrenholz approve Sub Grant Agreement as presented.
 2. Zach presented cover crop cost share payment voucher for Contract 2024-5 for 69 acres of cover crops for 3 years with a multi-species seed mix. Cost share amount to be paid is \$12,510.
 - M/S/P Schwitters, Jacobson approve payment on Contract 2024-5 as presented. All in favor, with Supervisor Ahrenholz abstaining from the vote due to conflict of interest.
 3. Zach presented the Lease of Space in Chippewa County Courthouse for 2025.
 - M/S/P Jacobson, Schwitters grant Zach Bothun authority to sign upon clarification that Chippewa County would pay for any future carpet/flooring removal as well as asbestos removal if needed.
11. **Discussion Items:**
 1. Tom gave an update on Cost Share Contract 2024-1. Project is finished and has been paid out.



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12. Staff Reports

1. **District Manager:** Monthly activities and updates reported include but are not limited to:
 - Cover crop contract site inspections.
 - Fall dormant seeding of CRP. Next spring's seeding schedule is nearly full already.
 - Finalized a riparian buffer seeding and tree planting for the City of Montevideo—Lagoon Park for next spring
 - Attended a CMRWP JPB meeting in Willmar on November 6.
 - Equipment maintenance and finished winterizing things at our tree building.
 - Issued a WCA Notice of Decision of approval for a solar project proposed to be installed within a farmed wetland basin just north of Walmart.
 - Contract folder management for fall projects. Processed site inspection forms, photos, updated checklists, verified seed tags with design tools, and prepped vouchers. Still waiting on some necessary information from landowners for the verification process.
 - Attended the MASWCD State Convention in Bloomington, MN with staff and our Conservationists of the Year, Halvorson Management.
 - Prepped for today's meeting.
 - Discussed funding/budget with County Commissioner Jaenisch. Discussed lease agreement and monthly amount being charged to the district.
 - Zach also noted that next month will be our policy update meeting.
2. **District Technician:** Monthly activities and updates reported include but are not limited to:
 - Oversight on project for contract 2024-1
 - Fall seeding—CRP Prairie strips, pollinator plot
 - Buffer reviews after crops were harvested
 - 2025 tree planning and site visits
 - Highlight slideshow prep work
 - Read DNR observation wells
 - Attended Annual Convention in Bloomington
 - Attended webinar for Water Gate Control Structure
 - Received fabric order of 100 rolls for spring 2025
 - Put equipment away for the winter

13. Important meeting dates were noted as follows:

1. Chippewa SWCD Reorganization Meeting will be held Monday, January 6, 2025 beginning at 1 p.m.

14. Adjourn.

1. M/S/P Schwitters, Ahrenholz approve adjournment of meeting. All in favor.

NEXT MEETING: January 6, 2025 1:00 p.m.
Chippewa County Courthouse-Commissioner's Room

*****PLEASE LET OFFICE STAFF KNOW A.S.A.P. IF YOU WILL NOT MAKE IT TO THE MEETING*****