

February 17, 2026 (a)

APPROVED
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE
MIDDLE-SNAKE-TAMARAC RIVERS WATERSHED DISTRICT
HELD AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN WARREN

8:30 a.m.

February 17, 2026

The Meeting was called to order by President Bill Petersen, Managers Bill Petersen, Brad Blawat, Robert Kovar, Keith Szczepanski, Jared Sands and Joey McGregor were present. Kyle Schlomann, Tyler Larson, Katrina Haugen, Robert Adam, Tony Nordby, Zach Green were also present. Jeff Hane, Mori Maher, and Dillon Nelson were in attendance using Microsoft Teams.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion unanimously carried

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Robert Kovar to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2026, meeting as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

The Treasurer's report was reviewed and filed for the auditor.

Motion by Mr. Brad Blawat, seconded by Mr. Robert Kovar to pay the following checks: Payroll checks 7381--7390 in the amount of \$21,762.75; From Administrative Funds check #20274-20315 in the amount of \$126,120.69 including ACH withdrawals; From Project Funds check #3733-3742 in the amount of \$204,426.82; From RRWMB funds check #238 in the amount of \$13,241.54; From Ditch Funds checks #3836-3837 in the amount of \$182123.98. Motion unanimously carried.

Zach Green was invited as a guest to discuss his permit (25-042), to install 190 acres of drain tile in sections 32 & 33 of West Valley Township. A concern had been raised to the Board that continuous perforated tile may have been installed through a wetland. It was also brought to the Board's attention that neither the permittee nor the contactor provided any notice of intent to proceed as was required in the permit conditions and District rules.

Mr. Green stated that he had discussed the potential WCA compliance issue with the Marshall County SWCD, and that he was provided a map for the wetlands and their setback limits in the SE4 of Section 32. According to Mr. Green, that information was provided to Field Drainage prior to installation. An as-built record drawing from the contractor was provided to indicate where non-perforated drain tile was installed.

There was further discussion on the veracity of the provided as-built drawing, and a concern of how allowing perforated tile through a potential wetland could harm the District's working relationship with partner agencies. It was the consensus of the Board that this issue could have been avoided had the permittee or the contractor coordinated with the District prior to install.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Jared Sands that the District communicate with SWCD on the alleged WCA violation concern, and that Field Drainage be invited to attend a future Board Meeting to provide evidence that non perforated tile was installed in accordance with the provided as built drawing. Motion unanimously carried.

Zach Green left the meeting at approximately 9:26 a.m.

Administrative Assistant Haugen reviewed the 2025 Profit and Loss statements for District Funds.

The following Administratively Approved Permit was reviewed:

Permit 26-003 James Solem to cost share in the removal and replacement of a failed 72"X55" CSPA culvert on the North Branch of Polk CD #175, SE4 of Section 5 Northland Township.

APPROVED

A petition from PKM Electric Co-Op to add lands to the benefited area of JD #16 was presented to the board. Watershed District Attorney Jeff Hane confirmed that he had reviewed the petition and it satisfied the requirements to be accepted by the board of Managers.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to set a Public Hearing to add lands to the Benefited area of JD #16 for March 16, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. Motion unanimously carried.

Engineering Technician Tyler Larson presented some examples from previous petitions on previously discussed alternative outlet fee calculation methods for adding unassessed lands to the benefitted area of a drainage system. In addition to the methods discussed previously, Mr. Larson proposed using the existing benefits formula, but extending the retroactive maintenance levy to 10 or 20 years, instead of the currently used 5-years.

Motion by Mr. Brad Blawat, seconded by Mr. Jared Sands that the outlet fee calculation formula to be used for petitions to add lands to the benefited area of a ditch system be changed from a period of 5-years of retroactive maintenance levy to 20-years, prorated by the share of total benefits for the land being added; whereas 20 years is roughly one generation of land ownership. Motion unanimously carried.

Administrator Maher provided an update on the Nelson Slough project and his continued conversations with Flood Hazard Mitigation and Minnesota Management and Budget representatives about the Grant Agreement.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to authorize Board President Bill Petersen to sign the agreement with Flood Hazard Mitigation once it is presented and agreeable to Mr. Maher. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Mr. Keith Szczepanski, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor to authorize Managers Bill Petersen and Brad Blawat to sign an easement with James and Christine Jacobson for the Nelson Slough project. Motion unanimously carried.

Tony Nordby from Houston Engineering provided an update on the status of finalizing the bid documents and providing the engineers estimate for Nelson Slough.

Dillon Nelson from HDR Engineering provided an update on the Letter of Map Revision for Newfolden.

Dillon Nelson left the meeting at approximately 10:36 a.m.

Administrator Maher stated that he is planning to start meeting with the individual landowners for Phase 2 of Swift Coulee and he is still waiting for the 2026 RIM (Reinvest in Minnesota) rates to be released. Anticipated construction will start in 2027. Meetings with landowners will start this week.

Administrator Maher provided an update on the meeting he held with Township officials along SD #3 and asked the board how they would like him to proceed. Discussion was held regarding setting up a project work team to help with securing outside funding. Attorney Hane stated that there would need to be a ditch hearing to set up a project work team. Maher was directed by the board to set up a landowner meeting with the adjacent landowners and provide numbers for alternative fixes for the ditch system.

The Klipping property demo was discussed. The work has been completed aside from seeding in the spring. The contractor has provided photos of the completed work.

Administrator Maher updated the board on the accounting process review that will be starting shortly. Any cost above \$15,000 will be brought to the board for approval prior to additional work being done.

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Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Brad Blawat to notice for 2026 Equipment Rental Rates for contractors with all quotes to be opened March 31, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. at the District Office.

Administrative Assistant Haugen provided an overview of the different leave availability that the Watershed District allows for including Holiday leave, Annual Leave, Earned Safe and Sick Time, Compensatory time, and Hazardous Weather Leave.

Discussion was held regarding Hazardous Weather Leave and how to account for time if an employee is working remotely with Hazardous Weather Leave as well as if the Watershed should purchase laptops for all employees so that they have the ability to work from home in the event they have time sensitive tasks that need to be completed during inclement weather. It was the consensus of the board not to make any changes to the current policy and not to purchase laptops for staff.

Discussion was held regarding BTAG (James Bergman) wanting to present new information to the board about Oslo Access/ loss of economy due to frequent flood. It was the consensus of the board to add James Bergman to the March 2 meeting agenda as a guest.

Administrative Assistant Haugen let the board know that Brady Martz would be working on the yearly Audit February 25-27th and would be onsite at the District Office on February 26th.

The following meetings were announced:

1. FDRWG meeting Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. virtual only
2. MSTRWD regular Board Meeting Monday, March 2, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. at the District Office in Warren, MN
3. Legislative Breakfast and RRWMB meeting with Agencies March 3rd-5th in St. Paul, MN

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Brad Blawat to adjourn the Meeting. Motion unanimously carried.

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Katrina Haugen
Recording Secretary

Brad Blawat
Secretary