

March 16, 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.

March 16, 2026

The Meeting was called to order by President Bill Petersen, Managers Bill Petersen, Robert Kovar, Lein Schiller, Jared Sands, and Keith Szczepanski were present. Mori Maher, Tyler Larson, Kyle Schломann, Katrina Haugen, Robert Adam, Tony Nordby, Robert Mager, and Rolland Miller were also present. Jeff Hane was in attendance using Microsoft Teams.

Motion by Mr. Keith Szczepanski, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller, to approve the agenda with the addition of JD #25-1 Lat 2 as item #5 under ditches. Motion unanimously carried

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller, to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2026, meeting as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Brad Blawat joined the meeting at approximately 8:35 a.m.

The Treasurer's Report was reviewed and filed for the Auditor.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Jared Sands to pay the following checks: From Payroll check #7391-7401 in the amount of \$22,727.93; From Administrative Funds checks 20316-20328 in the amount of \$30,084.21 including ACH withdrawals; from Project Funds Check #3743-3747 in the amount of \$58,070.49; From Debit Card transactions in the amount of \$8,934.33; From Ditches check #3838-3839 in the amount of \$24,999.05. Motion unanimously carried.

Dillon Nelson joined the meeting at approximately 8:37 a.m. (virtual)

Robert Mager was in attendance to discuss drainage issues regarding JD #20 and a potential Ditch Improvement as well as what he sees the problems to be. Mr. Mager was provided with information on how the Ditch Improvement process is initiated and what would be involved in bringing a petition for Improvement to the board by Attorney Jeff Hane.

Robert Mager left the meeting at approximately 9:25 a.m.

Motion by Mr. Jared Sands, seconded by Mr. Robert Kovar to approve the following permit:

26-004 Ransel Anderson to install 62 acres of field pattern drain tile in the N2 NE4 of Section 18 Vega Township, with a ¼" drainage coefficient; 40' tile spacings; a 12" CSP gravity outlet into the Main Brance of JD #20 ~Sta 75+00.

Motion unanimously carried.

The Findings and order from August 19, 2025 WD #8 Determination of Benefits hearing was presented to be signed by the board.

Motion by Mr. Bill Petersen, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller to authorize President Bill Petersen and Secretary Bradly Blawat to sign the WD #8 Determination of Benefits. Motion unanimously carried.

Engineering Technician Robert Adam presented work that he had been doing on a culvert inventory database which is utilized through ArcGIS as well as creating a permit on the website that can be directly submitted to District Staff by e-mail.

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Administrator Maher and Tony Nordby provided information that had been gathered regarding the capacity of JD #25-1 for a 5 year event and the current culvert scheme. The Board agreed Administrator Maher to shared this information with Mr. Zutz for potential drainage improvement planning.

Administrator Maher stated that the final FHM Grant Agreement for Nelson Slough had been received and President Bill Petersen has signed it as previously authorized.

Motion by Mr. Brad Blawat, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to update the Nelson Slough Improvement Project bid notice to reflect bids to be opened April 15th, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the Watershed District Office and to reconvene the Final hearing for the Nelson Slough Improvement project on April 20, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the District office to review and potentially accept a bid for construction. Motion unanimously carried.

Maher asked County Commissioner Rolland Miller if the Joint Ditch Authority could finalize the Petition proceeding related to what was submitted for the JD #19/Nelson Slough project. Miller stated that he would bring it up during the next County Commissioners meeting.

Jared Sands left the meeting at approximately 9:59 a.m.
Dillon Nelson left the meeting at approximately 10:00 a.m. (virtual)

The regular Boad meeting was recessed at 9:59 a.m. for the Public Hearing on PKM's Petition to add lands to the Benefited area of JD #16.

The Public Hearing on PKM's Petition to add lands to the benefited area of JD #16 was opened at 10:03 a.m.

Those in attendance were Managers Bill Petersen, Robert Kovar, Brad Blawat, Keith Szczepanski, Lein Schiller, Mori Maher, Katrina Haugen, Kyle Schlomann, Tyler Larson, Robert Adam, Tony Nordby, Rolland Miller and Attorney Jeff Hane (Virtual)

After a review of the records presented by District Staff and the District Engineer Tony Nordby including the Engineers memo reviewing the petition, the capacity of JD #16, and the impact of adding said lands to the Drainage system the board made the following findings.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. JD 16 has enough capacity to accept water as adequate outlet for the proposed project.
2. The effect of adding the proposed lands to the drainage system is negligible.
3. The engineer specifically recommends approval of the Petition.
4. The lands proposed to be added are situated essentially identically to the surrounding acres.

Therefore, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED

- a. The Petition is conditionally GRANTED. The addition of the lands to the benefitted area is conditioned upon payment by the Petitioners.
- b. The outlet fee required by statute shall be as follows: 1) the past 20 years of levy based on the per acre Benefits received for a total of \$50.03; and, 2) the costs of the proceeding include the engineering expense, the expense of publication, staff time and the expense of written notice to all those in the benefited area of JD#16, for a total of \$TBD

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- c. Upon payment to the District by the Petitioners of the outlet fee and the costs of the proceeding, the lands requested are deemed added to the benefitted area of Judicial Ditch #16, and the added lands may drain water into the legal ditch.
- d. Upon Petitioners' full payment of the fees and costs, the District shall amend the benefitted area rolls and the benefitted area map of JD#16 to reflect the addition of said lands and share with the Marshall County for future assessments.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller to adopt the Findings of Fact. Motion carried by roll call vote.

Manager	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Not Present
Bill Petersen	X			
Robert Kovar	X			
Brad Blawat	X			
Lein Schiller	X			
Keith Szczepanski	X			
Jared Sands				X
Joey McGregor				X

The Petition Hearing was recessed at approximately 10:25 a.m.

Administrator Maher provided an update the Swift Coulee Phase II discussions with Landowners from whom one is entertaining an idea of not wanting perpetual easement specially with the State.

Joey McGregor joined the meeting at approximately 10:30 a.m. (virtual)

Maher jointly with president Petersen provided an update of the Legislative event they attended in St. Paul.

Technician Tyler Larson provided information on obtaining additional licenses for AutoCAD, ArcGIS, and Adobe. Additional licenses for all three programs will run approximately \$4,800 per year.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller to authorize the purchase of additional licenses for Adobe, ArcGIS, and AutoCAD. Motion unanimously carried.

Administrative Assistant Haugen provided information that the Auditor suggests that the Watershed District adopt a password policy.

Motion by Mr. Lein Schiller, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to adopt the following password policy:

All MSTRWD Phones, tablets, and Computers must be secured with a password to prevent security breaches. All computer passwords must be documented and stored with the Watershed Districts IT contractor or the Administrative Assistant. Computer passwords must be a minimum of 8 characters including at least 1 upper case letter, 1 lowercase letter, one number and one special character.

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Phone and tablet passwords as well as any individual file passwords are required to be documented and stored by the Administrative Assistant in a locking fireproof cabinet.

Motion unanimously carried.

Administrative Assistant Haugen asked the board for authorization to work with the Auditor on getting reports to match up with the Audit Reports and with QuickBooks. In 2024 when additional work with the Auditors took place the cost was \$900.00. The cost is not anticipated to be as much since no onsite work is anticipated. Discussion was held about the root cause of issue potentially to be the beginning balances of accounts when the district started using QuickBooks back in 2006, and scope and limitation of the effort.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to authorize Haugen to continue working with the Auditor on project reports and to correspond those reports with the Audit report and QuickBooks with the cost not to exceed \$900 and the work to be done within 6 months. Motion unanimously carried.

Administrative Assistant Haugen provided the 2026 IRS mileage rates of 72.5 cents per mile.

Discussion was held regarding the snow removal policy that the board adopted in 2023 that states any snow removal done in a ditch that the Watershed District has jurisdiction over will require written permission from the District Office. Administrative Assistant Haugen asked if the board would like to have it run in the papers as this is the first year since the policy was updated that there has been average snowfall. It was the consensus of the board to have a notice run in the newspaper for two weeks.

Rolland Miller was in attendance and asked about receiving a perpetual permit to remove snow from JD #20 Br. A near his son's yard where the snow piles up yearly. It was the consensus of the board that the Miller family apply for a permit to remove the snow yearly and remove the snow as needed throughout the year.

An update of the last One Watershed One Plan meeting was provided by Maher and Manager Joey McGregor.

Administrator Maher asked the board if they would like to have some Continuing Manager education or refresher information provided at the end of board meetings as part of the meeting agenda.

It was the consensus of the board that Maher can add educational information at the end of meeting agendas but depending on how late the meeting is running will depend on if that item is reviewed on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

The following meetings were announced:

1. FDRWG/RRWMB annual conference- March 17-18, 2026, in Moorhead, MN
2. MSTRWD Regular Board of Managers Meeting Monday, April 6, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. in Warren, MN

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to adjourn the Meeting. Motion unanimously carried.

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

Katrina Haugen
Recording Secretary

Brad Blawat
Secretary