

DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

Dubuque SWCD District Office

210 Bierman Road, Epworth, Iowa 52045

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Demmer on Wednesday, July 16 at 4:58 pm at the District office and through Zoom. Those attending in person were Commissioners Wayne Demmer, Jeff Schmitt, Mike Freiburger, Dennis Rauen and Ken Behnke; Bill Meyer, DC; Helen Backes, CA; and Watershed staff Eric Schmechel, Scott Hendricks, and Allisen Freihage. Olivia Feldman, State Technician, attended during the FARMS – State Cost Share portion of the meeting. No one attended through Zoom.

Adopt Agenda:

Backes had one addition and two corrections to the agenda. Under Finance: correction to IDALS GAX reimbursement-change amount to \$739.19; Under FARMS: 1) Add Ben Hannan, 412 Waterway Project, certification for payment; 2) correction for Tony Kluesner's 412 Waterway application to postpone project.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the agenda with those addition and corrections.

25-121 Motion was made by Freiburger to approve the agenda with the addition and corrections presented. Motion was seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the minutes from May 15th and May 27th as amended and minutes from June 25th.

25-122 Motion made by Rauen to approve the minutes from the previous meetings. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance:

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the corrected May TR.

25-123 Motion made by Rauen to approve the corrected May TR. The motion was seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- June TR, bank statement, and bills were presented and reviewed. Backes gave a verbal review of the TR
Demmer entertained a motion to approve June TR, bank statement, and bills presented.

25-124 Motion made by Rauen to approve the June TR, bank statement, and bills presented. The motion was seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- The June NACD payroll funds transfer was \$2,280.74

Demmer entertained a motion to approve June NACD funds transfer.

25-125 Motion made by Behnke to approve June NACD funds transfers. Motion seconded by Rauen. Motion carried unanimously.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the IDALS GAX reimbursement for the 2nd quarter for \$739.19.

25-126 Motion made by Behnke to approve the IDALS GAX reimbursement. The motion was seconded by Rauen.

- Discussion was held regarding on interest bearing accounts for the District. Backes brought information regarding Dupaco and Fidelity Bank & Trust high yield account. Rauen suggested looking at Midwest Bank. Demmer and Backes will continue to investigate area financial institutions for the best interest rate and present them at the next meeting.
- Discussion was held on changing cell phone carriers as T-Mobile purchased US Cellular. Schmechel is in discussions with T-Mobile agent and transferring Watershed cell service to T-Mobile. More information to come.

FARMS - State Cost Share Updates:

Current FARMS '25 Account information: Cost Share \$91,450.87; REAP F/NG \$2,808.72; & REAP P \$9,190.35

- The commissioners discussed the state cost share applicants and certification projects. Feldman answered questions regarding the projects and resource concerns the commissioners had on the projects.

Applicant	Practice ID	Program	Practice	Estimated Total Cost	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
Ben Hannan	412	IFIP	Waterway 1.2 acres	\$2,710	\$1,355	Certification
Jeff Ploessl	412	IFIP	Waterway 1.5 acres	\$13,711	\$6855.50	Certification

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the cost share certifications for Ben Hannan and Jeff Ploessl.

25-127 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the cost share certifications for Ben Hannan and Jeff Ploessl. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

Applicant	Practice ID	Program	Practice	Estimated Total Cost	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
David Schlarman Rockville Farms	412	IFIP	Waterway .07 acres	\$7,200	\$3,600	Approval
Tony Kluesner	412	IFIP	Waterway 4.8 acres	\$29,000	\$14,600	Approval

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the cost share application for David Schlarman, Rockville Farms.

25-128 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the cost share application for Dale Schlarman. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

Tony Kluesner application is postponed until further notice.

Feldmann left at 5:40 pm

Applicant	Practice ID	Program	Practice	Estimated Total Cost	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
Jeremy Flur	1566	REAP	TSI 26.2 acres	\$4,192	\$3,144	Approval*
Marty McNamer North Cascade Dev	512	REAP	Tree & Shrub 3.7 acres	\$2,960	\$2,220	Approval*
Roger Kurt	666	REAP	TSI 5.9 acres	\$944	\$708	Approval
Trumm Brothers	666	REAP	TSI 5.5 acres	\$880	\$608	Approval

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the cost share REAP applications presented.

25-129 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the cost share REAP applications presented. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Backes gave an update on the state cost share Cover Crop program. Currently there are 94 applicants with over 10,500 acres in the program.

Watershed Update:

- Hendricks discussed the Watershed cover crop program. The Watershed selected local seed vendors for the program. Selection of the vendors was based on a ranking scale. Seed price was 50% of the ranking scale. Vendors will deliver the seed directly to the drone operators.
- A F2F Meet & Greet will be held in July 18 at Swiss Valley. Attendees will have an opportunity to speak with drone operators and seed vendors. Information will be given on a Soil Health Day and an upcoming Field Day at Zach Timm's farm.
- Schmechel discussed a soil health training series. The principals for soil health would be presented at a workshop. The workshop would be free to participants using outreach funds that are available.
- IPC Update – Hendricks is the only staff able to complete the conservation plans at this time. Discussion on Freihage able to complete the conservation plans, was discussed.

New Business:

New business was discussed next as Schmitt and Rauhen had to leave the meeting early.

- Rauhen asked if the District would be a sponsor for the Soul to Soil Conference.

Demmer entertained a motion for a \$250 Sponsorship for the Soul to Soil Conference.
25-130 Motion made by Freiburger for a \$250 Sponsorship for the Soul to Soil Conference. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- CDI is asking for donations towards CDI scholarships. Discussion was held on providing a basket for the Silent Auction at the CDI Conference.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve up to \$50 for a Silent Auction basket, showcasing Dubuque County.
25-131 Motion made by Schmitt to approve up to \$50 for a Silent Auction basket. Motion seconded by Rauhen. Motion carried unanimously.

- Discussion was held on time limits for guest speaker/visitor during the meeting.

Demmer entertained a motion to limit guest speakers/visitors to speaking time to 5 minutes during the meeting.
Motion made by Freiburger to limit guest speakers/visitors to speaking time to 5 minutes during the meeting. Motion seconded by Rauhen. Motion carried unanimously.

Backes will review and update the District Employee Handbook. She will give the revisions to the Personnel committee – Schmitt & Rauhen to review before bringing the handbook to the Commissioners for approval.

Schmitt and Rauhen left the meeting at 6:05 pm

NRCS Update:

Meyer gave a brief update on the NRCS program.

- Meyers suggested checking the website: precisionconservation.org. It is filled with a variety of data that would be beneficial to the farmers.
- Staff continue with field checks throughout the county.

Old Business:

- Backes discussed the FY 2026 SWCD Membership Drive. She will put together a list of businesses that would be potential members. Membership funds would assist the District with various projects.
- CDI conference is August 25 & 26. Demmer and Behnke are registered for the conference. Backes provided the policy statement: 2025 Policy Statement Recommended for Archival.
- Copies of the current CDI Connection were made available to the commissioners.

There was no further business to discuss, Demmer entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

25-132 Motion made by Rauhen to adjourn. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:41 pm.

The next regular meeting will be **Wednesday, August 20** at 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. This will be a working lunch meeting.

Wayne Demmer 8-20-25
Chairperson Date

Helin Backes 8-20-25
Secretary Date