

Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioner's Meeting
Wednesday January 21, 2026
210 Bierman Road, Epworth, IA 52045

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Demmer on Wednesday, January 21st at 4:17 pm at District office. Those attending were commissioners Wayne Demmer, Mike Freiburger, and Jeff Schmitt. Eric Schmechel, Watershed Director, Alyssa Hall of Pheasants Forever and Helen Backes, CA was also present in person. Those attending via Zoom include Scott Hendricks and Allison Freihage.

Adopt Agenda:

One additional item was added to the agenda. A REAP application was added for approval.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the agenda with the addition.

26-6 Motion was made by Freiburger to approve the agenda with the addition. Motion was seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

Due to other commitments, Eric Schmechel, Watershed Director, discussed the Watershed session first.

Watershed:

- Training requests for Scott Hendricks and Allisen Freihage to Leadership for Midwestern Watersheds were presented.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the training request presented.

26-7 Motion was made by Schmitt to approve the training request presented. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Schmechel gave a brief update of the upcoming events. "Roots to Results" to be held February 9th & 10th. Farmer to Farmer will meet again on February 11 in the evening. Zach Smith will be leading the discussion.
- Discussion was held on the RCPP grant with Sand County Foundation. Various ideas for new projects were discussed at length. More discussion is needed for funding practices.
- Schmechel will meet with Dubuque County Supervisors on Thursday January 22 to discuss the upcoming budget. Demmer stated he will attend the meeting also.

Speaker:

Alyssa Hall gave an update on Pheasants Forever programing.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meetings December 17, 2025, and December 22, 2025.

26-8 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the minutes from the previous meetings. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance:

- Approving the December TR – bills, bank statements and deposits, was tabled until next month as there were a couple of last-minute corrections.

Demmer entertained a motion to table approving the December TR, - deposits, bank statement, and bills.

26-9 Motion made by Freiburger to table approving the December TR. The motion was seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

- Backes stated there was a check correction on SWCD 3388 account regarding Go Daddy payment. It was paid by ACH instead of a physical check. Check # 1011 was written to SWCS for membership renewal.
- The January fund transfer was \$8,515.49 from NACD 3412 account to Watershed account 3396 including 2 transfers: 1) NACD employee payroll \$3424.69 for 12/19/25, 1/2/26 and 1/16/26 2) IA DNR testing payment \$5090.80.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the January fund transfer.

26-10 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the January fund transfer. Motion seconded by Schmitt.

Motion carried unanimously.

- Demmer discussed the \$250,000 CD renewal notice. The maturity date is 1/27/26. The renewal balance will be \$258,877.44.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the CD renewal.

26-11 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the CD renewal. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion

passed unanimously.

- Backes presented the membership renewal for Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI). Membership fee is \$1075.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the membership renewal for CDI.

26-12 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the membership renewal for CDI. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion passed unanimously.

- Backes presented the 2026 federal mileage reimbursement rate at \$.725/mile.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the new federal mileage reimbursement rate at \$.725/mile for the Watershed to begin 1/21/26.

26-13 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the new mileage reimbursement rate. Motion seconded by Demmer. Motion carried unanimously.

- Backes reminded the commissioners of the State financial site visit scheduled for Thursday, January 22, 2026. Demmer stated he would be present for the visit.

FARMS Update:

Backes presented various certifications and approval for State Cost Share program.

Cover Crops - 340

Name	Program	Practice ID	Total Acres	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
See attachment A					
40 applicants	WQI	Cover Crop	4474.9	\$104,420	Certification

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the Cover Crop Certifications.

26-14 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the Cover Crop Certifications. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

REAP

Applicant	Practice ID	Program	Practice	Total Acres	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
Wayne Decker	666	REAP P	TSI	10.6	\$1272	Approve Application

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the REAP P application for Wayne Decker.

26-15 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the REAP P application for Wayne Decker. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

NRCS:

No business or update for NRCS this month.

New Business:

- Slough Bill applications approval was tabled until next month.

Demmer entertained a motion to table Slough Bill applications approval until next month.

26-16 Motion made by Freiburger to table Slough Bill applications approval. The motion was seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously

- Backes informed the commissioners of the CDI proposed resolutions that the commissioners can submit to CDI.
- Discussion was held regarding past commissioner's memorials. The group felt to leave the policy as is and will address the memorials on an individual basis.

Old Business:

- An update was given on SWCD fundraising event – Trivia Night held on March 28 at Dyersville Commercial club. Olivia Feldmann had a sponsorship packet ready for the commissioners to continue with membership/sponsorships.
- Backes requested clarification on the \$300 scholarship funding from the Morrison Brothers. After discussion, the commissioners chose to offer \$200 and \$100 scholarships to Dubuque county seniors going into an agricultural or conservation field. They can attend either a 2 year or 4-year school. Backes will develop a scholarship form based on the CDI and Father Norman White Scholarship forms.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve a \$200 and \$100 scholarship for students entering the agricultural or conservation field.

26-17 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the scholarships as presented. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

- A brief discussion was held on the status of the soil loss complaint.

There was no further action to discuss.

Demmer entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

26-18 Motion made by Schmitt to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Wayne Demmer 2/18/26
Chairperson Date

Helen Backes, CA, 2/18/26
Secretary Date