

DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

1225 Seppel Road, Dubuque IA

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Demmer on Wednesday, August 20 at 11:39 am pm at the County Engineer's conference room and through Zoom. Those attending in person were Commissioners Wayne Demmer, Jeff Schmitt, Mike Freiburger, Ken Behnke; Bill Meyer, DC; Helen Backes, CA; and Watershed staff Eric Schmechel, Scott Hendricks, Allisen Freihage, and Dean Mattoon. Wayne Kenniker, Supervisor attended in person.

Adopt Agenda: The agenda was reviewed as presented.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the agenda.

25-136 Motion was made by Schmitt to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the minutes from July 16, 2025, and July 30, 2025, meetings.

25-137 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the minutes from the previous meetings. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance:

- July TR, bank statement, bills and deposits were presented and reviewed. Backes gave a verbal review of the July TR and deposits. The US Cellular final bill was discussed.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve July TR, bank statement, bills, and deposits presented.

25-138 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the July TR, bank statement, bills and deposits presented. The motion was seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- Funds transfer for July included 1) NACD payroll \$3659.15 to Watershed checking; 2) District checking to Watershed \$2917.20 for DNR testing payment and 3) District checking to NACD account \$1173.11 for IDALS NACD grant match.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve July funds transfer.

25-139 Motion made by Freiburger to approve July funds transfers. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- Discussion was held on transferring the current District accounts from Dupaco to Fidelity Bank & Trust.

Demmer entertained a motion to transfer the District accounts to Fidelity Bank & Trust.

25-140 Motion made by Schmitt to transfer the District accounts to Fidelity Bank & Trust. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Discussion was held on ACH deposits/withdrawals and a District Debit card. Backes stated the District could hold a debit card and explained the process for using the card.

Demmer entertained a motion for District ACH deposits/withdrawals and a District Debit card.

25-141 Motion made by Freiburger for District ACH deposits/withdrawals and a District Debit card. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- Discussion was held on transferring the State of Iowa direct deposit account on file to the NACD account. Backes stated there is less chance of error by submitting the IDALS matching grant payments directly to the NACD account.

Demmer entertained a motion for transferring the State of Iowa direct deposit account on file to the NACD account.

25-142 Motion made by Behnke for transferring the State of Iowa direct deposit account on file to the NACD account. The motion was seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

FARMS - State Cost Share Updates:

Current FARMS '25 Account information: Cost Share \$100,440.37; REAP F/NG \$588.72; & REAP P \$5098.35

- Backes gave an update on the state cost share Cover Crop program. Sign up for the program is ongoing.
- Backes and Meyer gave a brief update on the Cultural Resources process for state cost share projects. There is a delay across the state due to the loss of the state archeologist.
- There are no FARMS applications needing approvals, certifications or amendments.

Watershed Update:

- A soil loss complaint was received from the City of Asbury for the property on Heacock and Middle Road. Discussion was held on the complaint. Various photos were shared on the site. It was decided to meet with the tenant and landowner to discuss the complaint and recommendations to alleviate the erosion. A letter will be sent out to the parties involved with the date and time.
- Schmechel discussed the changes in Watershed staff positions. Dean Mattoon will take over the duties of the Urban Stormwater Coordinator as of September 1, 2025. This still leaves a position open that was previously held by Dean. Schmechel asked to advertise for a full-time staff – Urban Stormwater Assistant.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the promotion for Dean Mattoon to the Urban Stormwater Coordinator and to advertise for full-time Urban Stormwater Assistant.

25-143 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the promotion for Dean Mattoon to the Urban Stormwater Coordinator and to advertise for full-time Urban Stormwater Assistant. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Schmechel updated the Commissioners on upcoming conferences. Dean Mattoon will attend the Iowa Water Conference in September and Schmechel will attend the upcoming Midwest climate Resiliency Conference.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve Watershed Staff attending the upcoming conferences.

25-144 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the Watershed Staff attending the upcoming conferences. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- Schmechel discussed a soil health training workshop to begin in 2026. This workshop would be marketed to the tri-state area farmers, agronomists, and NRCS staff. The approximate cost of the course would be \$30,000. Sponsorships would include Farmer to Farmer group and Sinsinawa. Other potential funding sources would be the current RCPP and IPC funding. Barry Fisher will be the presenter for the sessions. Fisher's contract fees for the 12-month – 4 sessions workshop, would include preparing and presenting for the sessions, and travel expenses.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the contract for Barry Fisher.

25-145 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the contract for Barry Fisher. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- There is a Soil Health event scheduled for February 2026 at NICC- Calmar and Peosta. Alisha Sedlmeyer is assisting with the event.
- There is a Cover Crop Pop Up Drone Field Day tentatively scheduled for mid-September.
- IPC Update – Hendricks stated that 4 conservation plans are completed and working on 8 more plans.
- Schmechel gave an update on the 28E agreement extensions to 2031 with the City of Dubuque and Dubuque County. The City of Dubuque has added enforcement to their agreement. Schmechel submitted the agreement to the attorney for review. Schmechel is still meeting with Dubuque County.

NRCS:

Meyer gave a brief update on the NRCS program.

- Meyer stated it is CRP season. They are still completing field checks.
- There is an upcoming weed management workshop. It will be held on September 11, 2025, from 8:30 – 4 pm in Arlington, WI. Meyer highly recommends the speaker and workshop.
- Olivia Feldman, IDALS State Tech, received the "Employee of the Month" from IDAIS for August. Russ Overton nominated her based on her organization, quality of work and initiative.

New Business:

- A new SWCD Mobile Device Policy was presented.

Demmer entertain a motion to approve the SWCD Mobile Device policy.

25-146 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the SWCD Mobile Device policy. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

