

**DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER**  
**WATERSHED MEETING**  
**June 11, 2025**  
**1225 Seipple Road, Dubuque IA 52002**

**Call Meeting to Order:** The Watershed meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District held at the Dubuque County Building at 1225 Seipple Road, Dubuque, IA. It was called to order by Chairperson Wayne Demmer at 12:34 pm. Those participating included Commissioners: Wayne Demmer, Jeff Schmitt, Ken Behnke, Mike Freiburger; CA Helen Backes; Watershed Director Eric Schmechel and Watershed employees John Sewell, Scott Hedricks, Allisen Freihage and Dean Mattoon. Commissioner Dennis Rauen arrived at 12:44 pm.

**Adopt Agenda:** The agenda was approved as presented. Demmer entertained a motion to approve the agenda. **25-97** Motion was made by Behnke to approve the agenda presented. Motion was seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

**Personnel Annual Reviews:** For the personnel reviews, Schmechel stated that the staff were given a self-evaluation which included the past year's accomplishments, skills utilized or not utilized, challenges, future goals, and how to improve team efficiency. Schmechel also stated that Freihage and Hendricks current job descriptions will change due to the IPC grant and the RCPP grant. Mattoon's position will change from temporary to a permanent position. This will happen after the new 28 E Agreements are approved. The watershed employees left the meeting after the opening discussion.

Demmer entertained a motion to move to a closed session to discuss personnel reviews.

**25-98** Motion was made by Schmitt to move to a closed session to discuss personnel reviews. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

Allisen Freihage entered the closed session for her review. The review consisted of an interactive discussion with all the Commissioners and Schmechel, based on her self-evaluation and job description. Freihage left the closed session when her review was completed.

Scott Hendricks joined the closed personnel session. Hendricks was second in the review process, which contained an interactive discussion with all the Commissioners and Schmechel based on Hendrick's self-evaluation and job description. Hendricks left the closed session when his review was completed.

John Sewell joined the personnel session. Sewell was the third employee in the review process. An interactive discussion was held with all the Commissioners and Schmechel based on Hendrick's self-evaluation and job description. Sewell left the session when his review was completed.

Demmer entertained a motion to move out of closed session.

**25-99** Motion was made by Freiburger to move out of closed session. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- A lengthy discussion was held on salaries for the Watershed employees. Schmechel discussed Watershed salaries based upon the Federal GS levels/steps and comparing the levels with the new tasks of the job descriptions of the Watershed employees. After much discussion on the salary increase for employees, Schmechel recommended a 10% pay increase for Hendricks, Freihage and Mattoon. Schmechel recommended Sewell receive a 15% increase and Schmechel receive a 5% increase.

Demmer entertained a motion to approve the Watershed pay increases as recommended beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

**25-100** Motion made by Schmitt to approve the Watershed pay increase as recommended beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Motion was seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- A brief discussion was held on Mattoon's temporary position moved to permanent and health insurance. Schmechel recommended that it be tabled until after the 28E Agreements have been updated and signed.

Demmer entertained a motion to table Mattoon's temporary position and benefits after a new 28E agreement has been signed.

**25-101** Motion made by Rauen to table Mattoon's temporary position and benefits after a new 28E agreement has been signed. Motion was seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

With the salary discussion concluded, Commissioner Jeff Schmitt left the meeting.

Demmer entertained a motion to move to a closed session to continue the discussion on personnel reviews.

**25-102** Motion was made by Behnke to move to a closed session to continue with personnel reviews. Motion seconded Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Dean Matton joined the closed session to discuss his self-evaluation and job description. An interactive discussion with the Commissioners was held regarding Mattoon's experience, current duties and how to improve the monitoring system. Mattoon left the closed session when his review was completed.

Demmer entertained a motion to move out of closed session.

**25-103** Motion was made by Freiburger to move out of closed session. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

- Schmechel discussed a district policy regarding seniority and open positions withing the Watershed. Some of Watershed's positions are funded through the IPC and RCPP grants. Staff positions could be eliminated with the loss of those grants. If there were an open position within Watershed at that time, staff with experience and seniority should have the first opportunity to apply for the open position. After a brief discussion with the commissioners, the item was tabled for future discussion.
- Commissioners briefly continued the discussion on an interest-bearing money account for the District/Watershed accounts. No action was taken at this time.
- Schmechel gave a brief update on the Farmer-to-Farmer organization. They will hold a meeting on June 16 to discuss the bylaws and the IRS 501c 3 status.
- Schmechel requested a new iPad for Watershed to replace his older iPad.

Demmer entertained a motion to replace the iPad for Schmechel.

**25-104** Motion made by Rauen to replace the iPad for Watershed. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Demmer entertained a motion to adjourn.

**25-105** Motion made by Freiburger to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Behnke. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:44 pm.

The next meeting to be held on **Wednesday June 25 at 7:00 pm.** at the District Office in Epworth.

Wayne Demmer 7/16/25  
Chairperson Date

Helen Backes 7/16/25  
Secretary Date