



629 NORTH 11TH STREET
COURTHOUSE SUITE 7
MONTEVIDEO, MN 56265

PHONE: 320-269-2696

**Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District
Regular Board Meeting
February 2, 2026**

Minutes of the Chippewa Soil and Water Conservation District, 629 N 11th St., Suite 7, Montevideo, MN 56265.

1. Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Steve Jacobson at 2:00 p.m.
 1. Members present: Steve Jacobson, Aaron, Ahrenholz, Jerry Schwitters, Calin Eisenlohr, Michelle Overholser
 2. Others present: SWCD Staff- Desirae Jarett, Tom Sletta; Chippewa County Commissioners Matt Gilbertson and Kurt Stranberg
2. M/S/P Schwitters, Ahrenholz approve the agenda. All in favor.
3. Annual Business:
 - Rotation of Officers
 - Board Chair: Steve Jacobson
 - Vice Chair: Aaron Ahrenholz
 - Secretary: Jerry Schwitters
 - Treasurer: Calin Eisenlohr
 - PR&I: Michelle Overholser
 - Committee Assignments:
 - Personnel Committee
 - Steve Jacobson and Jerry Schwitters
 - WCTSA Joint Powers Board
 - Steve Jacobson with Michelle Overholser as alternate
 - Chippewa River Watershed Association
 - Calin Eisenlohr with Aaron Ahrenholz as alternate
 - Central Minnesota River Watershed Partnership
 - Jerry Schwitters with Michelle Overholser as alternate
 - Local Water Plan
 - Jerry Schwitters with Calin Eisenlohr as alternate
 - WCA Appeals Committee
 - Michelle Overholser and Steve Jacobson
 - Monthly Meeting Date/Time:
 - Usually first Monday of the month (see meeting calendar) at 3 p.m. in the Commissioner's Room of Chippewa County courthouse.
 - Meeting Calendar

▪ January 5, 2026	▪ July 6, 2026
▪ February 2, 2026	▪ August 3, 2026
▪ March 4, 2026	▪ September 8, 2026*
▪ April 6, 2026	▪ October 5, 2026
▪ May 4, 2026	▪ November 2, 2026
▪ June 1, 2026	▪ December TBD*
- Supervisor Compensation Rate: \$125 plus mileage and reimbursable meals
- Mileage Rate: 2026 IRS Standard Mileage Rate
- Official Depository: Minnwest Bank

*Date differs from the first Monday of the month

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



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- Official Newspaper: Montevideo American News
 - Disbursement of Agenda: emailed
 - M/S/P Schwitters, Ahrenholz approve Annual Business. All in favor.
4. M/S/P Schwitters, Ahrenholz approve the December meeting minutes. All in favor.
 5. Bills were presented for ratification and payment.
 6. **Discussion Items:**
 1. A grant balance update was given by Desirae.
 7. **Action Items:**
 1. Desirae presented the 2026 Guidelines on Use of SWCD Payments.
 - M/S/P Ahrenholz, Overholser approve 2026 Guidelines as presented. All in favor.
 2. Desirae presented the audit engagement letter from Peterson & Company, Inc.
 - M/S/P Schwitters, Ahrenholz approve engaging with Peterson & Company for the 2025 audit. All in favor.
 3. Desirae presented the updated Office Space Lease Agreement.
 - M/S/P Overholser, Ahrenholz approve lease agreement as shown. All in favor.
 4. Tom presented Contract 2024-5 Year 3 Deferral/Extension. Contract is a 3 year contract that was paid out in one lump sum. Contract holder is deferring year 3 (2026 Fall) to Fall of 2027 with the understanding that cover crops MUST be planted as designed and according to the O&M in Fall of 2027.
 - M/S/P Schwitters, Overholser approve deferral/extension as presented. Ahrenholz abstained from voting. All others in favor.
 5. Desirae presented policy updates in the Employee Handbook. Policy updates included changes due to MN PFML and Fair Labor Standards Act as well as other wording and grammatical changes for more clarification and understanding throughout.
 - M/S/P Overholser, Schwitters approve changes as presented. All in favor.
 6. Desirae presented policy updates in the Supervisor Handbook. Policy updates included changes due to MN PFML as well as other wording and grammatical changes for more clarification and understanding throughout.
 - M/S/P Overholser, Ahrenholz approve changes as presented. All in favor.
 7. Desirae presented policy updates to the Conservation Contracts Program and other BWSR Cost Share Programs Policy. Changes included the addition of Pasture and Hay Planting and Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and their rates to the FY2026 RCPP table. Changes also include sections XII, XIII, and XIV.
 - M/S/P Ahrenholz, Overholser approve changes/updates to the Conservation Contracts Program and other BWSR Cost Share Programs Policy as shown. All in favor.
 8. Desirae presented additions to the Tree Sales & Planting Policy Agreement. Additions include “of the planted year” in line g. and the addition of line h.
 - M/S/P Overholser, Ahrenholz approve additions as presented. All in favor.
 8. Desirae gave the Office Report in absence of District Manager.
 1. Within the office report, a discussion was had about the district’s annual report. Board liked the idea of using our presentation from the December meeting as our annual report and foregoing a mailer this year.
 9. Important Upcoming Dates:



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1. Desirae noted that Legislative Days is set for March 17-18, 2026 at Radisson Hotel St. Paul Downtown and the State Capitol. Desirae also noted the Annual Township Meeting in Maynard on March 16, 2026.
10. All other pertinent information was discussed.
11. Adjourn.
 1. M/S/P Overholser, Schwitters approve adjournment of meeting. All in favor.

NEXT MEETING: March 2, 2026 at 3 p.m. in the Commissioner's Room at Chippewa County Courthouse

*****PLEASE LET OFFICE STAFF KNOW A.S.A.P. IF YOU WILL NOT MAKE IT TO THE MEETING*****