

Minutes of the meeting of the Managers
Turtle Creek Watershed District
August 19th, 2025

The Turtle Creek Watershed Board of Managers met at the Government Center in Hollandale, Minnesota. Present were Jeff Ravenhorst, Jon Erichson, Michelle O'Connor, Dave Vanderploeg, Peter VanErkel, Steve Penkava, James Fett, and Att'y John Kolb remotely.

Also attending the meeting were Tom Butler, Mark Behrends, Sandy Tomschin, Jeanine Vorland and Shelly Gorham .

Dave made a motion to accept the July 2025 minutes as presented seconded by Pete and carried.

Correspondence was received from Freeborn County Auditor regarding a notice for increasing the Bond amount. Discussion will continue at the September meeting.

The Treasurers report showed \$182,029.86 in checking. Jon made a motion to accept this report subject to audit seconded by Pete and carried.

Dave made a motion to authorize Jon to check on rates and renew the CD that is due seconded by Pete and carried.

The following bills were submitted for approval to be forwarded to Freeborn County Auditor-Treasure:

Wesley Dahl	\$ 300.00 (Viewer)
Mark Behrends	\$ 1,190.00 (Viewer)
Rinke Noonan	\$ 1,604.00
Rinke Noonan	\$ 2,959.00
Rinke Noonan	\$ 1,368.00
Jones, Haugh, Smith	\$ 2,062.50 (routine Maintenance)
Jones, Haugh, Smith	\$ 2,100.00 (Ditch #81)
Jones, Haugh, Smith	\$ 825.00 (CD#30)
Jones, Haugh, Smith	\$ 6,826.54 (Freeborn Construction)

Pete made a motion to approve and forward the bills seconded by Dave, carried.

The following bills were submitted for payment by the district:

Accurant LLC	\$ 187.00
Peterson Company	\$ 5,750.00 (audit financial statements)
Albert Lea Tribune	\$ 137.70 (budget hearing)
Austin Daily Herald	\$ 137.00 (budget hearing)
Olson Tree Service	\$1,659.00
Olson Tree Service	\$1,908.46
CRWD	\$1,670.64 (reimburse monitoring costs)

Pete made a motion to pay the bills seconded by Jeff and carried.

James distributed copies of the State of Minnesota Joint Powers Agreement for the Managers to review while waiting for the permit.

James notified the Managers the audio equipment needs to be replaced and suggested the cost be split between Mower SWCD, Cedar River and Turtle Creek. Dave made a motion for Turtle Creek to share in the cost seconded by Pete and carried.

At 5:15 Pete made a motion to suspend the regular meeting for the administrative budget hearing for the year 2026 seconded by Jeff and carried. Chairperson Michelle called the hearing to order. Jon Erichson discussed the budget figures for 2026 which total \$117,400.00. Hearing no discussion Pete made a motion to accept the budget seconded by Dave and carried. Pete made a motion to adjourn the hearing and return to the regular meeting seconded by Jeff and carried. Nancy will forward copies of the certification to both Freeborn and Mower County auditors.

James reports he had a conversation with the new DNR Area Parks and Trails Supervisor Krista Jensen regarding the potential access location of the SE side of Moscow bridge. Krista and her crew are very overloaded at this time but, will be in contact with James.

The Schuneman/Reynen WRP Easement was discussed.

At 5:30 PM Pete made a motion to suspend the regular meeting for the public hearings seconded by Jeff and carried. Chairperson Michelle called the hearing to order for the final hearing on the Redetermination of Benefits of Freeborn County ditch #30.

Att'y John Kolb explained the purpose of the hearing and procedural requirements, Sandy Tomschin-Freeborn County Auditor verified the publication date of the hearing then Viewer Mark Behrends gave a presentation of the viewing process and the determination of benefits and damages for lands within the drainage areas of the ditch. The hearing was opened to the public for questions, hearing none it was then opened for Board discussion. Also hearing none Att'y Kolb continued with the questions for the Board to determine whether evidence supported adoption of the recommended benefits and damages. After discussion ceased Pete made a motion to adopt the findings and order accepting and adopting the redetermined benefits and damages as presented, recommended, and reviewed by staff, seconded by Dave and carried.

Pete made a motion to adjourn the hearing on ditch #30, seconded by Jeff and carried.

Chairperson Michelle excused herself from the meeting turning it over to Vice Chair Dave to continue.

Pete made a motion to convene the Final hearing on the Determination of Benefits of Freeborn County Ditch #81, seconded by Jeff and carried. Chairperson Dave turned the hearing over to Att'y Kolb following the same process as the previous hearing with the information pertaining to Ditch #81. Following no further discussion on this ditch Pete made a motion to adopt the findings and order accepting and adopting the redetermined benefits and damages as presented, recommended, and reviewed by staff, seconded by Jeff and carried.

Pete made a motion to adjourn the hearing and return to the regular board meeting, seconded by Jeff and carried.

Jeanine Vorland attended the meeting and reports Geneva Lake is not benefitting from the abundant rainfall and water levels are again quite high with recent heavy rains. Lake levels have increased nearly a foot.

Administrative requirements for a planned wetland restoration at Wo Wacintanka Wildlife Management Area are being finalized. A final draft of a Joint Powers Agreement between the Department of Natural Resources and the Watershed District has been presented to the board for review. The wetland project is anticipated to provide additional water storage as well as valuable habitat on this property.

Jeff made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Jon and carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy K. Finley,
Recording Secretary.