



North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District
505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792

Regular Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2026

The meeting was held in person at the District office. A virtual link was available.

Supervisors Present at Roll Call: Chuck Bainter, Jerry Hovi, Peggy Pearson, and Mark Peterson were present in person.

Staff Present In Person: Anita Provinzino, District Administrator; Jake Bendel, Watershed Conservationist; Corey Denning; Resource Conservationist; and Miranda Frenning, Accounting & Human Resources Specialist.

Staff Present Online: Phil Norvitch, Conservation Manager; Rachel Poppe, District Forester; Jon Utecht, AIS Program Coordinator, and Kaela Veihman, Watershed Conservationist.

Others Present: Melanie Bomier, BWSR was present in person.

The meeting was called to order at 10:31 a.m. by Chair, Peggy Pearson.

1. **Agenda** - Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.
2. **Minutes of Last Meeting** – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Mark Peterson to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Frank Modich joined in person at 10:33 a.m.

3. **Financial Reports & Program Summary** – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to accept the financial reports and program summary. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Accounts Receivable and Payable** – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Frank Modich to approve the accounts payable and accounts receivable as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
5. **Guest Introductions and Comments** – Melanie Bomier thanked the staff for getting all of the annual eLink reporting done on time.

NEW BUSINESS:

6. **Auditor Engagement for 2025 audit** – Moved by Frank Modich/Mark Peterson to engage Peterson Company Ltd to conduct the 2025 audit for a fee of \$5,400 plus \$650 for the RHV watershed based implementation fund. Motion carried unanimously.
7. **BWSR Funds**
 - a. **Cost Share Contract 26-02-1 with Landowner for Brush Management using 26 Conservation Contracts funding** – Moved by Mark Peterson/Frank Modich to approve Contract 26-02-1 with a landowner for 1.7 acres of brush management at a flat rate of \$786.05 for a total of \$1,336.00 utilizing FY26 BWSR Conservation Contracts funding. Motion carried unanimously.
 - b. **Little Fork River Watershed Planning Memorandum of Agreement Adding City of Cook** – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Mark Peterson to approve adding the City of Cook to the Little Fork River Watershed Planning Memorandum of Agreement outside of the initial 6-month timeframe. Motion carried unanimously.
8. **DNR CPL Funds:**
 - a. **Contractor Concern** – Anita informed the board of a contractor who has indicated they will not complete the work in accordance with the contract. She has been in contact with the county attorney and will proceed as recommended. No action needed.

The mission of the North St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District is to encourage sustainable use of our natural resources by engaging people in soil and water conservation in northern St. Louis County.

- b. Supervisor Attestation of No Financial Felonies in Past 10 Years for New Grant – Supervisors signed an attestation that Anita will submit to the DNR CPL program for the Trezona Trail grant award.
9. **Financial**
- a. **Billable Rates Effective Beginning 12/21/25** – Moved by Jerry Hovi/Frank Modich to approve the BWSR billable rates as presented effective 12/21/2025. Motion carried unanimously.
10. **MN Department of Agriculture Grant Application & Board Resolution 2026-04** – Moved by Mark Peterson/Jerry Hovi to approve Board Resolution 2026-04 authorizing staff to apply for an Agricultural Growth, Research and Innovation (AGRI) Urban Agriculture Youth Education grant. Motion carried unanimously.
11. **Upcoming Supervisor Meetings and/or Trainings**
- a. MASWCD Legislative Webinar – February 17
 - b. District Retreat - February 24 from 10:30-3:30
 - c. MASWCD Legislative Days - March 17-18 – Mark will attend
 - d. Policy Committee – St. Louis River - February 19
 - e. Soliciting Donations for Envirothon – Anita will provide Chuck and Frank with a letter to solicit donations for Envirothon.
12. **Other** – Anita advised the board that she learned yesterday that the email migration portion of the work agreed to in the Email Migration and Microsoft Defender Contract with ACP Professional Services approved in January, was completed in the past. This will result in a reduced fee after a new scope of services is drafted. – Moved by Frank Modich/Chuck Bainter to authorize the District Administrator to sign a contract with ACP Professional Services for Microsoft Defender Services in an amount up to \$16,520. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

13. **Rainy Headwaters/Vermilion Rivers Watershed Update** – Jake Bendel gave a presentation on the work he and other staff have completed to date and how it compares to the watershed plan goals.
14. **Monthly Progress Report** – See report on file
- a. **Additional Job Approval Authorities for John McCormick and Tristan Nelson** – the board was apprised of the additional job approval authorities that John and Tristan have achieved. This allows them to do more work plans/practices on their own.
 - b. **Tristan's compliment from BWSR's John Jaschke** – The board commended Tristan for his professionalism resulting in this compliment. The board also thanked both Kaela and Jake for their recent presentations.
15. **Natural Resources Conservation Service Report** – See report on file.
16. **Supervisor & Committee Reports** –
- a. Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development – Chuck gave a verbal report. See Chuck's prior email update.
 - b. Policy Committee – Little Fork River – Chuck gave a verbal report. See Chuck's prior email update.
 - c. Technical Service Area III – Chuck gave a verbal report. See Chuck's prior email update.
 - d. Peggy attended the Forage Council meeting and learned how goats can assist with buckthorn management, heard from a goat meat producer and discussed cover crops.

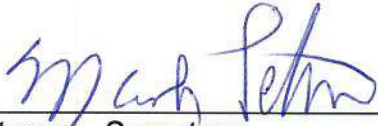
CLOSING:

17. **Confirm Next Meeting** – March 11, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.

18. **Adjourn** – Moved by Chuck Bainter/Frank Modich to adjourn the meeting at 11:37 a.m.
Motion carried unanimously.

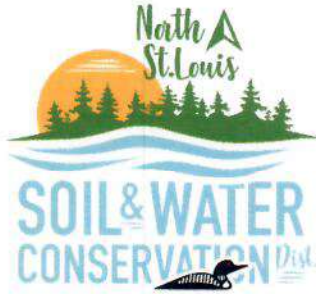
Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the meeting minutes approved by the North St Louis SWCD Board and that I am duly authorized to make this certification.



Mark Peterson, Secretary

March 11, 2026



Resolution 2026-04

**North St. Louis
Soil and Water Conservation District**

505 3rd St N, Ste A
Virginia MN 55792
(218) 288-6144
www.nslswcd.org

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture announced that applications will be accepted for Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Urban Agriculture Youth Education Grants. This grant program supports projects that establish or expand agriculture-based education programs serving youth; and

WHEREAS, the program requires a 25% cash match and must serve communities with a population of 5,000 or more; and

WHEREAS, the required 25% cash match of up to \$7,500 would be designated from St. Louis County general services grant; and

WHEREAS, Rock Ridge School District encompasses Eveleth, Gilbert and Virginia, serving more than 5,000 residents, and currently has daily summer programming for 40-60 youth; and

WHEREAS, District staff have connected with Rock Ridge Community Education staff and together came up with a plan to integrate one day per week of agricultural programming called "Northland Ag Explorers" into the Rock Ridge summer sessions that would serve K-1, 2-3, 3-6 grade groups; and

WHEREAS, District staff would develop and submit a grant application for up to \$30,000 in funding to integrate one day of agricultural programming for Rock Ridge's 12 week summer camp; and

WHEREAS, North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors desires to accept this funding and approves the use of matching funds, if the grant is awarded.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North St Louis Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors authorizes the staff to apply for and the District Administrator or Board Chair to secure and sign all documents related to any such award.

Motion Made by: Peterson
Seconded by: Hovi
Affirmative: Baister, Hovi, Pearson, Modick, Peterson
Opposed: none

Certification of Recording Officer

I, the undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by the North St Louis SWCD Board on the 11th day of February 2026 and that I am duly authorized to execute this resolution.

Mark Peterson, Board Secretary